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EDITORIAL

The Central European Theological Review (CETR) continues to fulfil its foundational mission of providing a critical platform for academic theological and philosophical works by scholars from Central Europe. By putting these works into focus, it aims to connect Central European theologians with fellow academics beyond the region, encouraging communication across geographical, cultural, and linguistic borders. In its current issue, the spotlight is firmly placed on Roman Globokar's comprehensive 2025 bioethics textbook (*Bioetika. Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani, 2025*), which serves as the starting point for a discussion about central topics, current challenges and the definition of bioethics.

The current issue features authors from Central Europe engaging in dialogue with Globokar's textbook. **Dominik Opatrný** explores the theoretical and practical questions concerning bioethical principles, contrasting the principlism of Beauchamp and Childress with the European bioethical model rooted in the Barcelona Declaration. The study illustrates how these distinct philosophical traditions approach ethical decision-making, offering a practical case study to highlight the unique strengths of European principles in fostering deeper ethical sensitivity and dialogue. **Gusztáv Kovács** examines Globokar's quest to map the historical genesis of bioethics, highlighting its roots in the broader, globally-oriented concepts of Fritz Jahr, Albert Schweitzer, and Van Rensselaer Potter. Furthermore, the study highlights the decisive role that theologians have played in the international institutionalization of bioethics and its successful domestication into the Central European academic discourse. **Ivica Kelam** engages in a critical confrontation between TESCREAL thought and the theological anthropology articulated in Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*. The article contrasts the transhumanist quest for immanent, technical transcendence with the Christian understanding of theosis and embodied human dig-

nity. It addresses the pressing political economy of digital colonialism and infrastructure dependency in Central Europe. **Tadej Strehovec** analyzes the principle of non-maleficence as a fundamental ethical barrier against the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Drawing on recent legislative developments in Slovenia alongside empirical insights from jurisdictions like the Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada, the paper argues that physician involvement in intentional death fundamentally subverts medical integrity and threatens the vulnerable.

Dejan Donev offers a critical review of the conceptual and methodological framework established in the opening chapter of Globokar's textbook. The review emphasizes Globokar's endeavour to move beyond a narrow clinical focus toward an integrative, interdisciplinary ethics of life that bridges environmental responsibility, social justice, and personalist philosophy. Iviča Kelam reviews the concluding chapter of Globokar's textbook, focusing on the expansion of bioethics into environmental stewardship and care for creation. The essay praises Globokar's nuanced engagement with the historical roots of the ecological crisis, his philological exegesis of biblical dominion texts, and his pioneering proposal of an "anthropo-relational" model of human responsibility.

In this Issue of CETR, linguistic editorial tasks were conducted using a combination of human expertise and artificial intelligence – specifically ChatGPT and Gemini – with the aim of further elevating the linguistic quality and editorial excellence of the journal through the responsible integration of new technologies.

We also hope that Globokar's bioethics textbook will reach a wide readership and become an indispensable resource in Central Europe and beyond, finding a strong resonance not only in theology and philosophy, but also in medicine and the health sciences.

The Editor

EUROPEAN BIOETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN BROADER CONTEXT – THEIR THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND APPLICATION IN SOCIAL WORK^[1]

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ABSTRACT

European bioethical principles—autonomy, dignity, integrity, and vulnerability—offer a distinct framework rooted in continental philosophy and care ethics. Introduced in the Barcelona Declaration, these principles contrast with the American principlism of Beauchamp and Childress, which emphasizes practical decision-making based on common morality. The text explores the origins, theoretical foundations, and applications of both systems, highlighting their differing understandings of ethical principles and their roles in public policy and professional practice. Special attention is given to the European model's potential for deeper ethical reflection. A case study from social work illustrates how both frameworks can be applied in practice, showing how European principles can enrich ethical sensitivity, dialogue, and care in helping professions.

Keywords: principlism, Barcelona Declaration, autonomy, dignity, integrity, vulnerability, social work

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In his book *Bioethics*, Roman Globokar presents side by side two sets of ethical principles and then asks his readers: “Compare the American and European principles of bioethics. What are the similarities and differences? Which ones are more helpful for solving ethical problems in bioethics?”^[2] On one side, we have the American principles by Beauchamp and Childress, which – despite all criticism – are still the most influential in bioethics worldwide. On the other side, there are the less well-known and used European principles by Rendtorff and Kemp. Does this show that Europe is weak in promoting its own policies? Or is there a problem with the principles themselves? As we will see, the European principles simply have a different purpose.

The so called Basic ethical principles in European bioethics and biolaw – autonomy, dignity, integrity, and vulnerability – were introduced in 1998 in the Barcelona Declaration.

^[3] The list has appeared in several books and academic papers. Most of these texts either briefly mention the list,^[4] explain the individual principles in more detail,^[5] or focus on just one of them, most often vulnerability.^[6] It is rare to find a full evaluation of the principles in their theoretical framework. The most detailed analysis of the European principles can be probably found in the book *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications on the Biosciences* by Erick Valdés.^[7] Its principal approach is not, however, ethical, but legal.

Nevertheless, many important questions still wait for clear answers. What is the actual status of this list? Why were these specific principles chosen? And what kind of theoretical framework do they belong to? These questions, often overlooked, are the ones I want to explore in this article.

To better show the unique features of the European principles, I will compare them with their American counterpart—the principles of Beauchamp and Childress—which have a much richer literature. I will base my comparison on the approach found in the book *The History and Future of Bioethics: A Sociological View* by the American sociologist John H. Evans. He does not look at principlism “from the inside” as an ethical approach to defend or debunk, but “from the outside” as a project that was once successful but is now being abandoned by many.

First, I will briefly explain how Evans describes the development and role of American principlism. Then I will show, in a similar way, how European principlism works. This will lead to a comparison of both systems. In the final part, I explore the possibility of applying the two sets of ethical principles to a different field, namely social work.

The Rise and Decline of the Georgetown mantra

To understand the significance and use of the American bioethical principles – autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice – we need to look at their origin, rise in popularity, and decline. In the 1970s, several scandals involving human research shocked the United States. The most significant was probably the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, a 40-year-long experiment that observed untreated syphilis among Afro-American population of one village. When it became public that the researchers only pretended to treat the patients in order to study the natural course of the disease, there was public outrage. This led to the creation of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1974–1978).

This commission, established by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, prepared the so called Belmont Report, published in 1979. This report dealt with research ethics and identified three main principles of bioethics: Respect for persons, Beneficence, and Justice.

These three principles were meant to represent what is called common morality – the general moral sense of American society. The commission that defined them included people from different parts of society, considering race, ethnicity, gender, and profession.^[8] The agreement

on these principles gave hope that the government could use them to solve bioethical issues in a way that would satisfy most citizens.

However, as Evans points out, the Commission was not balanced in the two areas that most strongly shape views on bioethics: religion and education. All members had university degrees and were either non-religious or belonged to liberal religious groups, such as mainline Protestantism, Reform or Conservative Judaism, or liberal Catholicism.^[9] Therefore, the commission only seemed to represent the American population without being truly representative.

One of the advisors of the Commission Tom L. Beauchamp, together with his colleague from Georgetown University's Kennedy Institute of Ethics, James F. Childress, developed the principles from Belmont Report in their highly successful book *The Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (first edition 1979). Beauchamp supported rule utilitarianism, while Childress followed a liberal Christian version of deontology. Although they disagreed on basic ethical theories, they found that they could still agree on the main principles for ethical decision-making.

Beauchamp and Childress did not simply adopt the list of principles from the Belmont Report, but introduced several changes. The principle of "respect for persons" was replaced with "respect for autonomy," and a separate principle of "non-maleficence" was

introduced alongside “beneficence,” because the duty to help and the duty not to harm often come into conflict.^[10] Their approach became so widespread that people began to speak of the “Georgetown mantra” and even the “tyranny of principlism.”

Subsequently, principlism spread beyond research ethics into health care ethics, policy-making, and public discussions about bioethics. It was adopted by other national bioethics commissions and hospital ethics committees across the country. A new group of bioethicists emerged, whose role was to advise on research and health care by offering neutral solutions based on the common morality reflected in principlism.

As I mentioned earlier, principlism was not as representative as its supporters believed. This led to the rise of bioethical activism—first from the conservative side, and later also from the liberal side. As a result, the influence of the bioethics profession that used principlism began to decline. This was most clearly seen during the presidency of George W. Bush. His bioethics commission, the President’s Council on Bioethics (2001–2009), led by Leon Kass, openly distanced itself from principlism.

A European Alternative Suggested

The European principles of bioethics and biolaw developed in a very different way. They began with a scientific project called Basic

Ethical Principles in Bioethics and Biolaw, which was supported by the European Commission as part of the Biomed program, under the European Union’s Fourth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. In this sense, it was a project similar to today’s ERC or Horizon grants.

The main leaders of the project were Jacob Dahl Rendtorff and Peter Kemp from Roskilde University in Denmark. Together with a consortium of 22 partners and after consulting other experts, they prepared the final document of the project, called the Barcelona Declaration. In this declaration, they identified autonomy, dignity, integrity, and vulnerability as the main European principles of bioethics. Rendtorff and Kemp later developed these ideas further in both joint and individual publications.

The European principles of bioethics aim to reflect a European perspective, but the group of people who created them was again not truly representative. Instead of expressing a shared moral sense (common morality), the principles reflect the modern continental – especially French – philosophical tradition. Both main authors, Rendtorff and Kemp, worked in ethics and theology and focused on modern French philosophy. Peter Kemp wrote his dissertation in the field of phenomenology,^[11] while Rendtorff studied existentialism and hermeneutics, especially the work of French philosophers like Sartre, Ricoeur, and Derrida.^[12] Their principles thus

focus on human corporality and on the whole person reflected in her life story.

The authors argue that their principles reflect concepts found in European legal documents.^[13] However, the actual influence of these principles on official documents at the European or national level is small. From a legal point of view, the Barcelona Declaration is only a statement made by a group of scholars. When it comes to the Council of Europe, even the name of its body – the Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO) – shows that its work is mainly based on a human rights approach.

Still, the authors managed to include the four European principles in a few national documents in Denmark, such as *An Ethical Foundation for Genetic Engineering Choices and Gene Technology* and *Ethics in the Plant and Foods Area – Towards an International Convention*.^[14]

Systematic comparison

Now that we have described how both systems developed, including changes in their legal status, we can compare the two approaches more systematically. We are not going to contrast each individual item on the list – each of the four “pieces of the mosaic” – but rather look at how these pieces fit into the whole picture. The focus will be placed on three main questions: What is the larger theoretical framework that these principles belong to? In what sense are they called “prin-

ciples”? And in what way do they claim to be universal?

American principlism was created as a form of applied ethics – a practical framework designed to solve new ethical problems in research and medical decision-making quickly and clearly. It was a response to a deadlock in the early days of bioethics: the major ethical theories, like utilitarianism and deontology, were seen as too complex and failed to gain broad agreement. In contrast, principlism, as a mid-level approach, avoided this difficulty by offering principles that most people could agree on – what is called common morality.^[15] Each principle is connected to one of the major ethical theories: beneficence and non-maleficence are close to utilitarianism, while autonomy and justice are linked to deontological theories. Because of this, the principles often come into conflict with each other, so they must be balanced carefully. In this way, principlism keeps the diversity of ethical views but reduces the discussion to the most essential points, making it easier to follow and apply.^[16] This is why principlism was later used not only in research ethics but also in health policy and public bioethics discussions.

The impulse for the creation of the European principles can be found in dissatisfaction with American principlism, especially its occasionally extreme focus on individual autonomy. Its authors did not intend to offer a simple tool for solving problems, but rather to bring

a broader perspective into the discussion and to provide general reference points for ethical reflection on new issues. The approach does not aim for quick solutions, but instead encourages deeper thinking – like when students leave an ethics class more confused than when they arrived.

These principles have been most useful in public debate and, to some extent, in policy-making, which was clearly one of the authors' main hopes. The approach is based on modern continental philosophy, especially phenomenology and hermeneutics, as well as the ethics of care, which stands in contrast to utilitarianism and American principlism.

These different contexts lead to different understandings of what the word “principle” means. Beauchamp and Childress see principles as general moral demands that are expressed more specifically through rules. These are *prima facie* principles, meaning they do not apply absolutely in every situation, but only as long as they do not conflict with each other. Since no principle is considered more important than the others, any conflict between them must be resolved through human deliberate judgment.

The principles proposed by Rendtorff and Kemp are, according to Valdés, not principles at all.^[17] He describes them as a “general and theoretical atmosphere” and as “ontological features.”^[18] Some of them resemble virtues,

like integrity, while others are seen as human qualities or conditions, such as dignity and vulnerability. The authors themselves refer to them as “values” and “reflective guidelines.” This means they express the most important values considered relevant from a European perspective, and these values are meant to guide ethical thinking. Unlike the American principles, they are interdependent – they mutually imply and reinforce each other as guides for the ethical and legal protection of persons.^[19]

It seems that the authors do not entirely agree on the internal logic of the European list of principles. On one hand, the *Barcelona Declaration* emphasizes that the list of European principles is not necessarily exhaustive.

^[20] On the other hand, Kemp later explains in one of his articles how the principles are connected and form a coherent whole. According to him, the core European value is care for the other, which is expressed through respect for autonomy. Since autonomy mainly concerns individual rights, it needs to be expanded by dignity, which expresses a duty toward others. However, dignity in its original meaning is linked to the powerful, so it must be balanced by integrity, which highlights the inviolability of the life story of the vulnerable. To fully understand what kind of integrity is meant, it must be connected to vulnerability. Vulnerability then becomes the final and essential call for care from others.^[21]

As explained in the historical overview, the American principles were created to reflect the idea of common morality in the United States. However, from the beginning, they have reached beyond national borders. Every culture must consider both the protection and the benefit of people involved in research and treatment, as well as general fairness. Finally, the global shift toward individualism brings about the emphasis on self-determination. These general moral demands take different forms in different cultures. Still, the American interpretation of autonomy, justice, non-maleficence, and beneficence is spreading around the world together with Western medicine and the research connected to it. This means that American principlism is becoming global – and this global spread is now causing pushback, in Europe, Africa, and other continents.^[22]

The European principles contain a different kind of tension between the universal and the particular. On one hand, they were created as a European alternative to American principlism. On the other hand, they are based on universal human rights. This combination shows an effort to be both globally relevant and culturally sensitive. The authors claim that the meaning of the four principles must always be shaped by the specific situation and social context. In this way, they are not fixed rules but flexible values that guide ethical thinking in different cultures. The inclusion of dignity and integrity reflects this aim, as both principles stress the impor-

tance of respecting the uniqueness of others and the whole of their life story. Valdés even suggests that the four principles are not just ethical tools, but “human being’s ontological features.”^[23] If that is true, then they express a particular European view of what it means to be human. And this creates a paradox: they describe general human characteristics, but they do so from a specifically European perspective.

Conclusion – application of the principles to social work

Comparing ethical principles would be just a mental exercise if it had no real impact on practice. Therefore, in the place of the conclusion, the final part will illustrate the findings through a case study.

Rendtorff claims that the European principles are not only relevant for bioethics, but can also be used in other areas of ethics.^[24] That is why I chose the field of social work—specifically, the ethical dilemmas faced by social workers. I will show how both the American and European principles can be applied to a dilemma taken from the social work ethics textbook by Mirka Nečasová.

A young girl who attends a youth day centre asked a volunteer who works there if he could meet her and her father at the centre. She stated that her father is angry with her. The volunteer checked with the manager of the centre

– he had no objections to the meeting. The father and the girl asked the volunteer at the outset to confirm full confidentiality, which the volunteer did. As he said later – it was naive. He learned of gross violence and abuse.^[25]

Dilemma: Should the volunteer respect the confidentiality and keep his promise or should he report the matter to the manager and discuss the whole situation with him?

As already mentioned, American principlism focuses on finding a clear solution for how to act. The first step is to identify which principles are relevant. In this case, three principles apply: respect for autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence. These are *prima facie* principles, which means that, if possible, the volunteer should respect all of them: the promise of confidentiality, the duty to help the girl avoid further abuse, and the duty not to cause harm. It is, however, clear that these duties are in conflict, so a choice must be made. If there is a legal or organizational rule that requires reporting abuse, then the decision has already been made by someone else. If not, the volunteer must carefully consider what is the right thing to do in this situation, taking into account how serious the abuse is and what options exist to prevent it.

Whatever the final decision is, the volunteer will likely feel some discomfort. For example, he may save the girl from danger but still feel a moral burden for breaking the promise

of confidentiality. This may create a need to do something to rebuild trust and reduce the harm caused to the relationship. Beauchamp and Childress call it a moral residuum.

In contrast, the European principles offer reflective guidance for thinking through the situation. The goal is to find a response that provides the best possible care for the client in danger. This means, first of all, respecting her autonomy—her right to have her wishes taken seriously. This autonomy is, however, threatened not only by breaking confidentiality, but also by the violence from her father. The proper answer is not to apply a fixed rule from the outside, but to listen carefully to the client and understand her needs. It is not just about respecting her wish for confidentiality, but also about supporting her autonomy in a deeper sense: her capacity to create goals for her life, to make moral decisions, to reflect and choose freely, and to take responsibility.

Autonomy has its limits for every person, but even more so for someone who is in a dependent position, like this client. That's why dignity is so important—but there are several concepts of dignity in European culture. Therefore, we may ask several questions: How can we respect the client's inalienable human dignity, as someone who has human rights? How should we treat her according to Kant's categorical imperative, which says that we must never use another person only as a tool to reach our own goals, because people

have dignity, not just value like objects? And how can we see in her the image of God, or even the beloved child of God?^[26]

The principle of integrity implies not only to respect the client's physical and mental well-being, but also the whole story of her life—including the fact that the abuser is her father. What has her life been like so far? What turning points and losses has she experienced? Where is her life heading now? And is the volunteer, in any way, disrupting this integrity?

The last principle raises the topic of vulnerability. First of all, it refers to the client's vulnerability—physical, emotional, and social. This is mostly because of her age and gender.

Her vulnerable face calls others to care for her (as philosopher Levinas says), and to protect her—but without any abuse of power. She needs support and a safe environment. Secondly, there is also the vulnerability of the volunteer, caused by lack of experience and lower authority. In this case, he was manipulated into a situation he should not have been in.

These questions and perspectives do not aim for a quick or clear decision between different options. Instead, they help us see the whole situation more fully. They can promote open dialogue, help to truly listen to the client and perceive her needs, discover possible variants of the apparent solutions and open new perspectives in the helping relationship.

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- [1] This study is a result of research funded by the internal grant agency of Palacký University, IGA_CMTF_2025_004, "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Faith: Dialogues within Christian Theology."
- [2] Roman Globokar, *Bioetika* (Ljubljana: Teološka fakulteta, 2025), 59.
- [3] See Peter Kemp and Jacob Dahl Rendtorff, "The Barcelona Declaration: Towards an Integrated Approach to Basic Ethical Principles," *Synthesis Philosophica* 23, no. 2 (2008): 245–49.
- [4] See, e.g., Benedict Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku, *From What We Should Do to Who We Should Be: Negotiating Theological Reflections and Praxis in the Context of HIV/AIDS Among the Igbo of Nigeria* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011), 272.
- [5] See, e.g., Matti Häyry, *Roles of Justice in Bioethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 18–22.
- [6] See, e.g., Claudio Sarte, "Vulnerability: At the Source of Biolaw," in *The Discourse of Biorights: European Perspectives*, ed. José-Antonio Seoane and Oscar Vergara (Cham: Springer, 2024), 65; Roman Globokar, "Ranljivost človeka, družbe, narave in Boga," *Bogoslovni vestnik* 82, no. 1 (2022): 11.
- [7] See Erick Valdés, *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications on the Biosciences* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2021), 31–84.
- [8] See John H. Evans, *The History and Future of Bioethics: A Sociological View* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 44.
- [9] Evans, *History and Future of Bioethics*, 89–90.
- [10] In classical principlism, no principle is superior to another; therefore, conflicts that arise must be resolved on a case-by-case basis. This aspect has been the subject of criticism, leading to the development of systems with a hierarchical structure; for example, in Béla Somfai's system, the principle of the sanctity of human life takes precedence over the others. See Gusztáv Kovács, "The Evolution and Challenges of Hungarian Catholic Bioethics," in John Anthony Berry (ed.), *Religion in Contemporary Society: Identity, Culture and Public Life* (Msida: Malta University Press, 2025), 256.
- [11] See Peter Kemp, *Théorie de l'engagement*, vol. 1, *Pathétique de l'engagement* (Paris: Seuil, 1973).
- [12] See Roskilde University, "Jacob Dahl Rendtorff," accessed July 5, 2025, <https://forskning.ruc.dk/en/persons/jacrendt>.
- [13] See Kemp and Rendtorff, "Barcelona Declaration," 241–43.
- [14] See also Peter Kemp, "The Idea of European Biolaw: Basic Principles," in *Biolaw and Policy in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Erick Valdés (Cham: Springer, 2019), 27.
- [15] See Jennifer Flynn, "Theory and Bioethics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2023 ed., accessed July 5, 2025, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/theory-bioethics/>.
- [16] Evans compares this limitation of the discussion to essential facts to the introduction of double-entry bookkeeping; see John H. Evans, "A Sociological Account of the Growth of Principlism," *Hastings Center Report* 30, no. 5 (2000): 31–39.
- [17] See Valdés, *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications*, 79.
- [18] Valdés, *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications*, 79.
- [19] See Valdés, *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications*, 60; Jacob Dahl Rendtorff, "Basic Ethical Principles in European Bioethics and Biolaw: Autonomy, Dignity, Integrity and Vulnerability – Towards a Foundation of Bioethics and Biolaw," *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 5, no. 3 (2002): 235.
- [20] See Kemp and Rendtorff, "Barcelona Declaration," 246.
- [21] See Kemp, "Idea of European Biolaw," 29–31.
- [22] See, e.g., Jude Thaddaeus Buyondo, *The Critique of Bioethical Principlism in Contrast to a Black African Approach to Bioethics* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2024).
- [23] Valdés, *Biolaw: Origins, Doctrine and Juridical Applications*, 79.
- [24] See Rendtorff, "Basic Ethical Principles in European Bioethics and Biolaw," 235.
- [25] Mirka Nečasová, *Úvod do filozofie a etiky v sociální práci* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2001), 91.
- [26] For an overview of approaches to dignity, see Remy Debes, "Dignity," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2023 ed., accessed July 5, 2025, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dignity/>.

FROM JAHR TO GLOBOKAR: TOWARD A GENUINE CONCEPT OF BIOETHICS

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■ ABSTRACT

Roman Globokar's 2025 textbook on bioethics places significant emphasis on the historical development of the discipline, highlighting in particular its original, globally-oriented interpretation. This study aims to demonstrate how Globokar attempts to define a genuine concept of bioethics by drawing on its historical evolution. The roots of bioethics go back further than traditional medical ethics: Fritz Jahr's pioneering "Bio-Ethik" concept, Albert Schweitzer's principle of the "reverence for life," and Van Rensselaer Potter's concept of global bioethics all contributed to making bioethics a bridge between the natural sciences and the humanities, encompassing the protection of human, animal, and environmental life. Furthermore, the study addresses the decisive role of theologians and church thinkers in the international institutionalization of bioethics and its domestication into the Central European scientific discourse.

Keywords: bioethics, global responsibility, medical ethics, Fritz Jahr, Albert Schweitzer, Van Rensselaer Potter

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Anyone wishing to write the history of bioethics cannot ignore the role that theology and religion played in its development. Theologians and concepts derived from theology remain present in this discipline to this day. Although the interdisciplinary nature of bioethics cannot be denied, some scholars question the relevance of theology,^[1] especially regarding whether theologians can say anything relevant in this field beyond the boundaries of their religious communities – even though there is ample evidence for the significance of religion in bioethics in today's societies.^[2]

The author, Roman Globokar – whose 2025 bioethics textbook is the subject of this study – is himself a theologian and a professor at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Ljubljana. As an academic who has been engaged with bioethics for more than two decades, he addresses a broad spectrum of topics in his publications, including euthanasia and assisted suicide,^[3] palliative care,^[4] transhumanism and human enhancement,^[5] surrogacy,^[6] pandemic ethics,^[7] AI ethics,^[8] and the ecotheology.^[9] This demonstrates, on the one hand, the extraordinarily broad scope of bioethics, and on the other, the manifold areas in which a theologian can contribute to bioethical discussions.

Globokar's 2025 Slovenian textbook reflects this same versatility.^[10] The volume covers topics such as the status of the human em-

bryo, abortion, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, genetic engineering, euthanasia, environmental ethics, and animal ethics. Crucially, before addressing these specific applied topics, the textbook situates bioethics within the history and taxonomy of science, paying particular attention to its relationship with theology.

In what follows, we seek to enter into dialogue with the first three introductory chapters of this work, focusing especially on Globokar's conception of bioethics, its theological dimensions, and the specific Slovenian context – the latter being paralleled with the historical development of bioethics in Hungary.

What Do We Mean by Bioethics?

Today, bioethics is taught across a vast array of academic settings, ranging from medical schools and faculties of theology and philosophy to law and even technology departments. This institutional dispersion underlines a fundamental challenge: defining precisely what we mean by bioethics is far from being straightforward. The simplest approach is to interpret it strictly as medical ethics – a discipline that replaces traditional medical casuistry, the cultivation of professional ethos, and deontological instruction. Another possibility is to expand medical ethics to encompass environmental ethics or, in a theological context, the care of creation, thereby affording the discipline a broader scope.

There is, however, another approach that seeks to understand the organic development of the discipline and, proceeding from there, attempts to define the essence and task of bioethics. Roman Globokar follows this path in the first chapter of his book, where he examines the emergence of bioethics historically from the broadest possible perspective, referring to two theologians who are not traditionally recognized as bioethicists today. One is Fritz Jahr (1895–1953), a Protestant pastor who primarily published on educational topics; the other is Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), known for his work in church music and biblical studies – among other things, as a leading figure of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* – as well as for his medical missionary work in Africa.

Fritz Jahr and the Term Bio-Ethik

There is no doubt that bioethics was introduced into scientific discourse in the 1970s by the American biochemist and oncologist Van Rensselaer Potter, who made it widely – indeed, globally – accepted.^[11] For a long time, the academic community considered Potter to be the first to coin the term.

Globokar notes in his book, however, that the German term Bio-Ethik had already been used earlier by the German theologian Fritz Jahr (1895–1953).^[12] While Hans-Martin Sass appears in the reference, Rolf Löther^[13] had already pointed out in the closing years of

the twentieth century that the term figured prominently in the title of Jahr's 1927 article: Bio-Ethik: Eine Umschau über die ethischen Beziehungen des Menschen zu Tier und Pflanze.^[14] In this work, drawing on Kant, Jahr formulated the so-called bioethical imperative, according to which we must consider not only other human beings – more precisely, persons – as ends in themselves, but as far as possible all living beings.^[15] Globokar highlights this as well – “the fundamental rule of our actions, namely the respect for every living being, as something that has an end in itself” – as the core of Jahr's concept of bioethics.^[16]

This idea – although it may seem self-evident in our time – was considered revolutionary a hundred years ago, representing a break with the fundamental anthropocentrism of the ethics of that period. Unfortunately, historical circumstances were not favourable to Jahr's ideas, and his work fell into oblivion for more than half a century. It would have been desirable in many respects for Jahr's approach to spread throughout the scientific world. One reason is that Jahr did not argue on an emotional or purely speculative basis but referred to contemporary scientific research exploring how animals and plants can feel and react to environmental stimuli.

Among the cited researchers are Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801–1887), an early researcher of plant psychology; Raoul Heinrich Francé (in Hungarian, Francé Rezső; 1874–1943), a

representative of bionics and plant behavioural research; and Jagadish Chandra Bose (1858–1937), a pioneer of plant physiology. Although their findings may no longer hold up entirely today, taking natural science results into account was a fundamental step toward the emergence of bioethics. Jahr's other key insight was that humans are capable of empathy not only with fellow human beings, but also with animals and even plants. On this basis, he attempted to establish why human moral obligation extends to other living beings, and how respect for other living beings could be integrated into education.

Albert Schweitzer and the Reverence for Life

Globokar connects the aforementioned concept of bioethics to the thought of a Nobel laureate born twenty years before Jahr, in 1875, stating that Jahr's "definition is strongly reminiscent of the thought of the theologian, philosopher and tireless humanitarian Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) on the reverence for life".^[17] In his thought and throughout his life, Schweitzer uniquely combined medicine, ethics, and theology, transcending the anthropocentric thinking characteristic of his era and recognizing that the technological power acquired by mankind could no longer be interpreted within conventional moral frameworks.

Globokar appropriately references Schweitzer's reflections on the First World War, which

he viewed as "an outward sign of the inner collapse of Western civilisation."^[18] He cites Schweitzer's famous phrase, "I am a life that wants to live, in the midst of a life that wants to live," and emphasizes that in contrast to the isolation of Cartesian thought, it centers on "the experience of his connectedness with all living beings".^[19] Globokar excellently highlights an essential element of Schweitzer's contribution to ethics, which is not satisfied with mere intellectual insight, but takes into account the experience of the interconnectedness of all existing beings and the will arising from it:

"The starting point of ethical thinking is that my life is embedded in the interplay of life, the life of human beings and the life of other living beings. I experience in my interior the will to my own life, but I also co-experience the will to the life of other living beings around me."^[20]

Globokar refers to Schweitzer at another place in his textbook, when listing ecological bioethical models, as one of the main exponents of biocentrism.^[21] From this perspective, it might seem that Schweitzer is viewed primarily as an environmental ethicist. However, this is only partly true: in Globokar's concept of bioethics, ecological and medical bioethics cannot be separated; rather, they rest on identical principles and form a single system. Schweitzer therefore plays a significant role not only as a parallel and deeper developer of Jahr's Bio-Ethik concept, but even

more so as a thinker who was able to recognize and live out the fundamental connection between life and moral action.

Van Rensselaer Potter and Global Bioethics

Regarding the concept of bioethics, Globokar typically attempts to depict its organic genesis. This presents difficulties in several respects: partly due to the challenge of demonstrating connections and mutual influences among individual authors, and partly because bioethics is understood in many different ways. Nevertheless, Globokar succeeds in presenting a continuous unfolding, connecting the ideas of Jahr and Schweitzer not only with each other, but also with later thinkers more distant in time and context, such as Van Rensselaer Potter (1911–2001), widely regarded as the father of modern bioethics.^[22]

Globokar identifies in the term “global” used by Potter the link through which the thought of Jahr and Schweitzer can be connected to the modern bioethics that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. Through this, he rightfully views them as precursors to the approach of Van Rensselaer Potter (1911–2001). Potter’s goal was to create a discipline that serves as a bridge between the natural sciences and the humanities, primarily between biology and ethics in order to ensure the long-term survival of humanity.

This idea is reflected in the title of his 1971 book: *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future*.^[23] In the preface of the book, Potter writes:

“The purpose of this book is to contribute to the future of the human species by promoting the formation of a new discipline, the discipline of Bioethics. If there are ‘two cultures’ that seem unable to speak to each other – science and the humanities – and if this is part of the reason that the future seems in doubt, then possibly, we might build a ‘bridge to the future’ by building the discipline of Bioethics as a bridge between the two cultures.”^[24]

Potter interprets bioethics extremely broadly, in a “global” manner, building a bridge between human health and the natural world, between healthcare and environmental protection. For this reason, topics such as sustainability or population issues can also fall within the scope of bioethics.

Despite the parallels, Globokar clearly sees the difference between the approaches of Jahr and Schweitzer on the one hand, and Potter on the other. Potter emphasizes global responsibility because he lived in a truly globalized world, where responsibility for the planet extends beyond individuals, communities, national borders, and continents: “Thanks to the new power that man has acquired through scientific and technological progress, he also has a responsibility – for the first time in history – for the survival of the entire planet.”^[25]

Although Globokar does not explicitly mention it, Potter, as a physician, was heavily influenced by the work of the forester and ecologist Aldo Leopold, which led to ecological and medical-ethical issues becoming closely intertwined in his understanding of bioethics (Potter 1988). Through this, the concepts of Jahr and Schweitzer took on a form that could be integrated into the framework of the academic world. This is not only because Potter emphasizes the accountability of science, but because representatives of various disciplines – physicians, agricultural specialists, natural scientists, and humanities scholars – could all find their place within this new form of discourse.

When Theology Enters Bioethics

At first glance, it seems that the above concepts of bioethics have little to do with what is traditionally called medical ethics. Since the latter was traditionally part of university structures, it was natural that bioethics primarily found its place within the framework of medical ethics. Globokar continues his narrative of the historical development of bioethics here, directing attention to institutions whose establishment was partly motivated by the exposure and ethical analysis of abuses in human medical experimentation.^[26] He focuses on two morally fraught experiments: the Willowbrook Hepatitis Study and the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. Following these, he presents the emergence of bioethical institutions that

retain immense significance today: The Hastings Center, founded in New York in 1969, and the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, established at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. in 1971. Although historical events such as the Nuremberg Doctors' Trial and the creation of the Nuremberg Code – which prompted a rethinking of ethical norms regarding medical experiments – underlie these developments, Globokar rightly points out that ethical problems arising from new medical technologies, such as organ transplantation, dialysis, and IVF, were also driving forces behind the establishment of The Hastings Center and the Kennedy Institute of Ethics.^[27] He emphasizes that this brought a shift in perspective, placing “the rights and duties of patients and doctors; the rights and obligations of subjects and researchers; and the developing guidelines for ethical review of medicine and human research” at the center of bioethical inquiry.^[28]

Although Globokar is himself a theologian and makes reference in the textbook to theological texts – primarily Christian and especially Catholic magisterial documents – the significant role that theologians played in the development of the new, largely principle-oriented bioethics is not elaborated extensively. For example, Globokar only mentions Albert R. Jonsen (1931–2020) as a representative of “the new casuistry”, but does not write about his role in the development of bioethics anything further. Jonsen, who was a Catholic priest and a Jesuit

theologian, became a representative of this new discipline at a time when no one in hospitals or universities yet knew what bioethics actually was.^[29] Among Jonsen's mentors was James M. Gustafson, who regularly addressed moral questions raised by the "new biology," particularly genetics and neuroscience. Alongside them, it is worth mentioning the Methodist Paul Ramsey, who grounded his bioethical thought in the biblical concept of covenant;^[30] the Anglican Joseph Fletcher, who based his approach on love-centered utilitarianism; and the Catholic Richard McCormick – one of the key contributors to the Kennedy Institute – who utilized natural law reasoning as a common language applicable in both religious and secular contexts, deeply rooted in Catholic theology.^[31]

The Belmont Report is also mentioned in Globokar's textbook in connection with the development of the four principles of bioethics. Although not explicitly stated, the role of Catholic theological tradition and Catholic thinkers can be traced in two seminal documents in the history of bioethics: the Belmont Report^[32] and the manual *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*,^[33] published by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress. In both documents, there is a clear effort to rediscover relevant elements of tradition in order to create new frameworks for medical ethics.

Published in 1979, The Belmont Report is one of the foundational documents of modern bio-

ethics, establishing basic ethical principles for research involving human subjects in medicine and psychology. The report was prepared by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, established in 1974, which, alongside Jonsen, included or consulted several Protestant theologians, such as Karen Lebacqz, James M. Gustafson, and LeRoy Walters, director of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics.^[34]

During the drafting of the Belmont Report, Tom Beauchamp served as one of the staff philosophers working with the commission. While drafting the Belmont Report, Beauchamp worked concurrently on his own academic volume with his colleague James Childress. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* was likewise published in 1979 and quickly became the standard textbook for bioethics education. It is important to mention that both Tom Beauchamp and James Childress held degrees in religious studies, with the latter earning his doctorate in religious ethics. Their manual popularized the logic of the Belmont Report worldwide by transforming it into a highly usable framework that medical students and ethics committees across the globe could readily adopt.^[35]

Bioethics in National Languages

An interesting feature that also appears in Globokar's textbook is that in Central Europe, it was typically theologians or church-affiliated

ed laypeople who pioneered the groundwork for bioethics and consolidated the new discipline within universities. Globokar's textbook mentions Jože Trontelj (1939–2013), who played a significant role as a member of national and international bioethics committees, including participation in drafting the Oviedo Convention. In Hungary before 1989, religious scholars forced into exile abroad, such as Andrew C. Varga SJ (1917–1994) and Béla Somfai SJ (1932–2015), transmitted bioethical literature from Western countries, as did Gyula Gaizler (1922–1996), a physician who was the first layperson to graduate from the Theological Academy in Budapest.^[36] Varga authored the first bioethics textbook published in Hungarian, while Gaizler's textbook is still used in medical and healthcare education today. It can be stated that theologians in Central Europe played a major role even in the time of socialism in transmitting bioethical issues and concepts, and in domesticating bioethics as an academic discipline.

Back to the Origins

Globokar outlines a compelling trajectory in presenting the historical development of bioethics. In the work of Schweitzer, Jahr, and Potter, bioethics emerged as a global endeavor – one that not only encompasses the whole world but also elaborates humanity's relationship toward all dimensions of life, living beings, and life itself. In contrast, the new bioethics that emerged primarily in the Unit-

ed States after World War II was a more broadly conceived, interdisciplinary science integrating the sobering experiences of the Third Reich and reflecting the rapid advancement of medical science. Interestingly, theologians were actively involved in both stages of development. This dual presence is due partly to the similarly global character of theology, and partly to its focus on social processes and sub-systems, including healthcare. For this reason, Globokar's textbook can cite encyclicals such as Pope John Paul II's *Evangelium vitae* (1995), Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in veritate* (2009), and Pope Francis's *Laudato si'* (2015), as well as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's instructions *Donum vitae* (1987) and *Dignitas personae* (2008). This demonstrates that ecclesiastical documents simultaneously address both of the aforementioned domains and apply both horizons in formulating teaching.

At the same time, Globokar points out that “in the early 1990s, the understanding of bioethics begins to return to the original meaning of the word, as if an adolescent were returning home to his father after years of searching as a child and teenager”.^[37] In doing so, he rejects the interpretation of bioethics as merely “an updated medical ethic” and outlines a much broader horizon: according to this view, bioethics is “a call to modern man in a scientific-technical civilisation to adopt a new attitude towards life in general: towards his own life, the life of his fellow human beings and

the life of the biosphere as a whole”.^[38] This renders bioethics truly global in both its perspective and its sphere of responsibility.

Here, the textbook refers primarily to Hans Jonas as an indispensable representative of this approach, who, alongside his critique of technological progress, made decisive contributions to formulating the nature of responsibility.^[39]

The final definition articulated in Globokar’s textbook reflects this comprehensive, global approach: Bioethics is “a science that studies the ethical aspect of human intervention in life in all its forms: human life, animal life and the life of the natural as a whole; it characterised by an interdisciplinary approach and can be understood as a human responsibility towards all that lives”.^[40]

The Concept of Bioethics and Textbook Writing

A key aspect of different bioethics textbooks is the specific concept of bioethics from which authors proceed. Textbooks written for agricultural, law, or medical faculties are clearly more limited and focused in their particular perspective and scope. Globokar’s textbook, thanks to its global definition of bioethics, can be utilized across virtually any university faculty, as it is comprehensive in both subject matter and perspective. It does not merely examine the sub-themes of specialized sciences through the critical methods of ethics, but, in accordance with the nature of ethics, explores both traditional and emerging fields of bioethics by working with the broadest possible concept of human responsibility and life. Consequently, this textbook can be consulted not only by physicians, biologists, theologians, jurists, and environmental specialists, but by anyone, since, true to its understanding of bioethics, it embodies “a call to modern man in a scientific-technical civilisation to adopt a new attitude towards life in general”.^[41]

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THE TECHNOCRATIC IMPERATIVE AND THE INVIOLEABLE DIGNITY OF THE PERSON – THE TESCREAL BUNDLE IN LIGHT OF MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

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■ ABSTRACT

Parts of the TESCREAL constellation and Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* disagree about human dignity, and this article traces that disagreement through transhumanist, longtermist, and AI-safety writing, attending closely to embodiment, finitude, moral agency, and who owns digital infrastructure. Two understandings of human transcendence are at stake. The transhumanist projects discussed here locate transcendence in the technical modification of human capacities; Christian accounts of the *imago Dei* and *theosis* understand it instead as a gift – one that fulfils creaturely existence rather than replacing it. The closing sections bring the disagreement down to the ground: concentrated ownership in the AI industry, and Croatian and Hungarian institutions that depend on infrastructures they neither own nor can independently audit. Read this way, the political economy of AI is not a separate ethical application but part of the theological question itself.

Keywords: TESCREAL; Magnifica Humanitas; transhumanism; imago Dei; digital colonialism

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Introduction

Discussions of artificial general intelligence often move from claims about computational performance to claims about human nature. Bostrom's account of superintelligence, for example, concerns what machines may be able to do, but it also encourages questions about which human capacities are reproducible and surpassable. Theological analysis becomes relevant at this point. If intelligence is treated primarily as measurable performance, embodiment, dependence, and finitude are likely to appear as constraints on an otherwise improvable system. This interpretation is not shared by all AI researchers, and the argument below does not attribute it to the field as a whole. It examines its influence within a specific group of intellectual and institutional networks.

Timnit Gebru and Émile P. Torres coined the acronym TESCREAL for an interconnected bundle of transhumanism, extropianism, singularitarianism, cosmism, rationalism, effective altruism, and longtermism. They trace overlapping networks of founders, funders, and advocates who present the pursuit of AGI as a project for humanity as a whole.^[1] Neşe Devenot consequently calls TESCREAL the “court philosophy” of a global oligarchic class.^[2] Ozy Brennan pushes back, calling the acronym a label for “a loosely connected group of beliefs” rather than a creed every person under it would sign.^[3] He is right that

TESCREAL is no unified doctrine – but that criticism does not touch the recurring institutional connections Gebru and Torres document. So I keep the term, with its scope limited: patterns of funding, personnel, advocacy, and shared vocabulary, not complete doctrinal agreement. Disagreement among the seven traditions can coexist, on this usage, with their institutional convergence as an object worth analyzing.

I do not use TESCREAL as a neutral label its members would all sign – nobody would. What it does is name affinities a case-by-case account would miss: confidence in accelerated progress, a view of human nature as revisable, a fixation on existential risk, epistemic and financial authority concentrated in a handful of networks. Brennan warns this courts guilt by association, and I take the warning seriously enough to keep a movement's own claims separate from abuses committed in its name – not because fairness excuses what follows, but because a sloppy argument would hand TESCREAL's defenders a technicality to hide behind. My interest is not in giving this constellation its most flattering hearing. It is in who profits when a person's suffering gets redescribed as an engineering backlog, and who is told to wait.

Because the label carries more weight in what follows than a loose family resemblance can bear on its own, I state the criteria. I use TESCREAL for a constellation identifiable through

three analytically distinct forms of connection: a shared anthropological premise, that human nature and its limits are legitimate objects of technical redesign; a documented institutional overlap of funding, governance or personnel among the organizations advancing that premise; and a shared legitimating vocabulary in which the redesign is presented as a benefit to humanity as such. These are dimensions of connection rather than a single test to be passed, and different actors belong differently: a theorist may exhibit the first and the third and none of the second, while a firm may exhibit the second and the third without ever stating the anthropology at all. In each case I claim only what the evidence for that case supports, and where the distinction is material to the argument I identify which form of connection is at issue. Nothing here requires that any single actor exhibit all three. Three distinctions matter here and I try to keep them apart. Transhumanism is an anthropology; longtermism, a theory of moral priority; and existential-risk research is descriptive in a way strong longtermism is not. Market concentration in the AI industry is simply a fact about capital – it tells us nothing, by itself, about anyone’s ideological commitments. All the constellation names is a convergence, and that is all the argument below actually needs.

Pope Leo XIV’s 2026 encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* supplies a framework for that judgment. It does not treat technology as an en-

emy of humanity and repeatedly recognizes scientific creativity as a gift capable of alleviating suffering. Its decisive question is whether technical power remains ordered to the person and the common good – a criterion joining anthropology to political economy, since technologies embody choices about what to measure and optimize, and control of platforms, data, and compute settles who makes them.^[4] Antonio Marturano and Andrea Ciucci describe its treatment of artificial intelligence as a *res nova*, a genuinely new reality that reopens anthropological and social questions.^[5]

A word about how I read the encyclical. Much of *Magnifica Humanitas* develops positions the magisterium already held: the technocratic paradigm comes from *Laudato si’*, the universal destination of goods from a century of social teaching, the account of dignity from *Dignitas infinita* and behind it *Gaudium et spes*. What is new is narrower and worth naming: the treatment of artificial intelligence as a *res nova* rather than one more instance of technology in general (MH §§4–5); the extension of the social function of property to models, platforms and data (MH §67); and the identification of data extraction as a form of colonialism (MH §178). The document also holds a tension it does not resolve. It welcomes technical creativity as a gift and warns that concentrated technical power evades oversight, and it supplies no criterion for deciding when a particular development has crossed from the first description to the

second. I read it as a framework to be argued with rather than applied, and where I extend it beyond what it states I say so.

My thesis is that the friction between TESC-REAL and *Magnifica Humanitas* is a conflict between two models of transcendence. Influential TESC-REAL currents seek an immanent transcendence produced by technical power: longer life, expanded cognition, artificial superintelligence, posthuman successors, a vast future civilization. Christian anthropology understands transcendence as received in relationship, and therefore as the fulfilment of creaturely life.

1. The TESC-REAL constellation and the technocratic imperative

The acronym compresses seven traditions: capacities expanded beyond biological limitation (transhumanism), self-transformation toward indefinite progress (extropianism), discontinuity produced by intelligence exceeding human performance (singularitarianism), posthuman intelligence spreading through the universe (cosmism), belief formation corrected against bias (rationalism), reason applied to doing the most good (effective altruism), and the long-term future as the major moral priority (longtermism).^[6]

The connections are real without being total: existential risk links Bostrom's superintelligence to longtermist priority-setting, astro-

nomical future populations link longtermism to cosmism, effective altruism supplies the institutions for ranking causes and rationalism the culture of probabilistic reasoning. Disagreements remain, and *Magnifica Humanitas* itself resists treating the bundle as monolithic, describing transhumanism and posthumanism as an "archipelago" of islands joined by a common sea: the central role of technology and the aspiration to transcend the human condition (MH §§115–16).

1.1. *Human nature as a work in progress*

The Transhumanist Declaration states that humanity may broaden its potential by overcoming ageing, cognitive shortcomings, involuntary suffering, and confinement to Earth, and defends wide personal choice regarding life-extension therapies, reproductive technologies, and cryonics.^[7] The prevention of involuntary suffering is a widely shared moral aim, and that is what makes it serviceable. The declaration borrows the moral authority of medicine and spends it on a program medicine never authorized. The shift occurs when the restoration of a patient's functioning gives way to an open-ended program for redesigning the species. The constituency is not hard to identify. Jeff Bezos put some \$3 billion into Altos Labs; Alphabet founded Calico for the biology of ageing; Sam Altman put \$180 million of his own into Retro Biosciences, whose advertised product is ten additional healthy years.^[8] Private balance sheets are buying a science of

ageing on terms they set. These investments place the direction of longevity research under the influence of private capital, and unless access and public benefit are institutionally secured, whatever therapies emerge will be distributed through the markets that funded them and will reproduce the purchasing inequalities of those markets. That is what the annexation of a common problem looks like, and it is dressed in the vocabulary of medicine because that vocabulary commands a trust a balance sheet has not earned. The two anthropologies diverge over the end toward which intervention is directed, and over who is in the room when it is chosen – and in this room, the door is not open.

Bostrom states the more radical premise directly: transhumanists view human nature as “a work-in-progress, a half-baked beginning that we can learn to remould in desirable ways.”^[9] Max More sets humanism, which relies on education and culture, against transhumanism, which applies technology to limits set by biological inheritance.^[10] Taken to its end, the programme seeks states no longer describable as human.

Therapy and enhancement are not always technically distinguishable, but the distinction still carries moral weight as a question of orientation. Therapy receives the embodied person as the subject whose flourishing guides intervention. Radical enhancement reverses that relation by treating a preferred

capability profile as the standard against which persons are measured. Once a capability like that becomes normative, people who lack it risk being read as deficient, not simply as persons living with an unwanted limitation – which makes the standard itself, and whoever gets to set it, a moral question.

Michael Sandel argues that the drive toward genetic mastery can weaken our appreciation for the gifted character of human powers,^[11] and his concern is not only about personal humility. Treat achievement as wholly self-produced, and institutions start reading undesigned limitations as preventable failures – meanwhile the successful have less reason to notice how much they owe to circumstance and to other people. Solidarity suffers for it. If every limitation looks preventable in principle, then whoever stays limited can be blamed for not obtaining the fix, and disability starts to read as an avoidable lapse from a preferred standard.

1.2. AGI, superintelligence, and technological salvation

Singularitarianism pushes the logic of redesign further still. Bostrom defines superintelligence as an intellect greatly exceeding human performance in virtually all domains: an agent whose strategic and scientific capacities could displace human institutions outright.^[12] Ray Kurzweil’s vision extends the transformation beyond Earth: humans merge

with machines, descendants spread through the cosmos, and consciousness awakens the universe.^[13] Max Tegmark frames the horizon as “Life 3.0,” a stage of cosmic evolution in which agents redesign their software – culture and knowledge – and their biological hardware, so that body and mind become artefacts of deliberate engineering.^[14]

The register is religious in more than a loose sense. There is an eschatology, the singularity; a damnation, extinction or misalignment; an elect community with its own canon and conferences; and a hoped-for transformation of matter and mind. The functions are those of a soteriology, performed by organizations that pay salaries and raise capital.

Geburu and Torres challenge the appearance of inevitability surrounding the AGI race. AGI, on their account, is an undefined aspiration whose safety cannot be tested as a bounded engineering system can, and institutions sustain the race by framing it as necessary to safeguard humanity.^[15] The structure is circular. AGI is said to create existential danger, and the danger is then invoked to justify accelerating the institutions building it. The effect of safety discourse is to centralise authority precisely in the organizations whose ambitions most need scrutiny – and nobody has said who audits a warning issued by the party it protects.

Antiqua et Nova offers a related critique: calling machine output “intelligence” obscures

what is most distinctive about the human person, since AI is a product of human intelligence, not an artificial instance of it (AN §35). Models perform tasks that once required human cognition without exhausting the concept, which in human beings is embodied, historically situated, affective, interpersonal, and open to meaning. Reading a child a story. Sitting with an elderly parent through a night of pain. The encyclical reaches for the same examples.^[16] The benchmark suites do not contain them.

1.3. Effective altruism and the abstraction of the future

Effective altruism begins with a compelling intuition: direct resources where they alleviate the most suffering. Longtermism extends that impartiality across time. Hilary Greaves and William MacAskill defend strong longtermism, on which what most differentiates available actions is their effect on the far future.^[17] Because future civilization could contain enormous numbers of lives, even small reductions in existential risk can, on this arithmetic, outweigh every conventional priority.

Longtermism is not a single position, and I should not treat it as one while insisting that TESCREAL is no doctrine. MacAskill’s own book grants that present generations hold claims which cannot be traded away wholesale, and the movement’s institutions fund

bed nets and deworming alongside speculative work on existential risk.^[18] The objection here is narrower. It concerns strong longtermism, on which the effect on the far future is what most differentiates available actions, and it concerns what that premise does once it reaches an institution with a budget: the discount on the present becomes a rule rather than a temptation, and nobody has to defend it case by case.

Longtermism is right about one thing: short-term political thinking is a real failure, and future generations do have claims on us. Catholic social teaching has said as much for a while: *Laudato si'* insists that “intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice” (LS §159). What longtermism adds on top of that is an exchange rate between the unborn trillion and the person standing in front of us — set, naturally, by whoever is doing the calculating.

Trouble starts once expected-value arithmetic converts hypothetical future lives into an aggregate so vast that existing persons shrink to a rounding error. Gebru and Torres argue this reasoning can legitimate whatever projects powerful institutions already favour, while marginalizing harms already observable.^[19] Devenot goes further. Utopian narratives of this kind naturalize widening inequality by presenting elite control as necessary for civilisation’s future, and she cites Nick Beckstead’s claim that saving lives in wealthy

countries may matter more, since wealthy countries generate more innovation.^[20] Allowing productive potential to govern the value of a life is philanthrocapitalism with a formula attached. Effective altruism markets itself as evidence-based generosity, and strong longtermism converts that generosity into a mathematics justifying almost any present cost against an imagined trillion-person future. This is the work philanthrocapitalism has always done: an existing concentration of private wealth comes to look like the most rational instrument of justice, and nobody in the room is paid to ask whether justice has anything to say about the concentration itself.

The Catholic objection is personalist. Future persons are real, and the person standing before me is still not a replaceable unit in an intertemporal welfare calculation. Calculation informs prudence. It does not tell me what I owe the woman in the next room.

2. Imago Dei: embodied dignity against the anthropology of optimisation

2.1. Dignity as a gift that precedes achievement

At the centre of *Magnifica Humanitas* is the biblical affirmation that women and men are created in the image and likeness of the triune God, willed for communion with God, others, and creation (MH §50). Dignity does

not depend on ability, wealth, position, or technological capacity; it is a gift that precedes achievement (MH §§50–51). *Gaudium et spes* had already taught that human beings, “created in God’s image,” are commanded to “subdue the earth” as stewards serving the whole person (GS §§12, 22). *Dignitas infinita* radicalises the premise for the digital age: dignity is “infinite,” inseparable from the human being “independently of, and before” any social recognition, untouched by disability, cognitive decline, or the absence of enhancement (DI §1).

This unsettles every ranking of persons by intelligence, productivity, health, or independence. Grounded in rational performance, dignity would make a stronger cognitive system worth more than a person with dementia; grounded in autonomy, it would count infancy and dependence as diminished personhood. The *imago Dei* establishes an equality nobody competes for and nobody can lose, which is why a woman in the late stages of dementia and the consultant who examines her stand in exactly the same place.

Preferential concern for the vulnerable is therefore the political test of whether a society recognises dignity as equal or only says so. Leo XIV puts the criterion sharply: a civilisation is measured by the care it offers rather than the power of its means, and by whether it can still recognise the other as a face rather than a function (MH §114).

2.2. *Embodiment and the refusal of digital dualism*

Transhumanist thought varies in its treatment of the body, and mind-uploading scenarios express a powerful dualist temptation. Bostrom lists the apparent advantages of becoming an upload: backup copies could improve life expectancy, and persons could be transmitted as information at the speed of light.^[21] The scenario presupposes that personal identity is captured by a reproducible informational structure, a premise close to “dataism,” the reduction of the person, and of material reality generally, to information transferable to a more durable medium.^[22] The scenario has no way to ask what the transfer leaves lying on the table, because everything it would leave there has already been defined by its premise as inessential.

The *imago Dei* belongs to the whole person. Roman Globokar stresses that dignity belongs to the indivisible person and is therefore inherent in the body, which participates in the person’s being in God’s image.^[23] *Antiqua et Nova* treats corporeality as an integral part of identity and vocation (AN §9). The body is therefore never available as an instrument to be specified, and the phenomenology of embodiment arrives at the same conclusion from outside theology.^[24] Germline programming has no living witnesses yet; its nearest analogue does. I have sat across from people working through irreversible medical

decisions taken about their bodies in infancy, before anyone could consult them, and I have never once heard gratitude for having been corrected. What I hear instead is grief — for a self that was settled before it ever had a vote. I offer these as impressions from a handful of conversations, not as evidence.

2.3. *Vulnerability, finitude, and the meaning of limits*

Reading the encyclical's treatment of vulnerability takes some care. It is not claiming disease is good, or that medical progress ought to stop. The warning is narrower than that: incapacity, ageing, and vulnerability are increasingly seen only as defects awaiting correction, when in fact humanity often matures through limits — compassion, dependence, and reconciliation only become intelligible within creaturely finitude at all (MH §§118–19). That perception does not simply arise; it gets manufactured and sold. An anti-ageing market needs customers who have accepted that an ordinary body is running behind schedule, just as an enhancement market needs parents who have accepted that an ordinary child is underperforming, and somebody books the revenue from that acceptance while someone older, poorer, or disabled pays for it — read as a problem awaiting a solution he cannot afford.

The International Theological Commission frames this balance well. Humanity, it

says, must neither censor fragility in favor of strength alone nor resign itself passively to limitation, ignoring what is inscribed in an intelligent and spiritual nature (QVH §1). Joseph Meaney works the same balance from the clinical side, where the boundary between restoring function and redesigning a person gets drawn case by case, patient by patient.^[25] Reviewing *Quo vadis, humanitas?* for *Crkva u svijetu*, Ivan Bodrožić finds its chapters converging on a single demand — that development be “integral,” taking in body and soul, heart and conscience, reason and will together.^[26]

Brent Waters is blunt about it: “being and remaining human requires that humans cling tenaciously to their finitude.”^[27] That only sounds severe if finitude gets confused with avoidable misery. A creature who receives life, depends on others, and cannot master the future can still be faithful, still be hopeful. Total control removes risk, yes — but it also removes the ground on which promises get made and kept, whether in a hospice ward, a marriage, or the care of a parent who no longer recognises the child providing it.

2.4. *Created co-creators and the limits of creaturely making*

Aquinas locates the *imago Dei* in the rational soul's capacities of memory, intellect, and will, constitutive of the human being from creation (Aquinas, ST I, q. 93, aa. 4–7). *Gaudium et spes* affirms that human beings, through work

and technical skill, genuinely share in the Creator's ongoing activity. The Lutheran theologian Philip Hefner later reformulated this as the "created co-creator," in which technological creativity participates in God's continuing work while remaining bounded by the createdness it exercises (GS §§34–36).^[28] The formula belongs to a Lutheran theology of vocation that grants freedom considerable scope, and its characteristic risk is not hypothetical. Once "co-creator" starts carrying all the argumentative weight, "created" shrinks down to a pious preface. Where the language of co-creation is detached from a prior account of creaturely limits, it supplies theological warrant for technological initiative without an equally determinate criterion of refusal. Hefner did not intend to license technological expansionism, and the risk described here belongs to the reception of the formula rather than to his own use of it. Genesis already tells the creature placed in the garden that he is a steward and not an owner, and no reformulation was needed to establish it. What the reformulation added was a warrant for initiative, and where that warrant travels without the limit meant to accompany it, the balance the formula was built to hold does not survive. "Co-creator" has moved a long way from "created."

Magnifica Humanitas rebalances the pair. Creatureliness is the standing condition of the maker and not the preamble to his license; technical skill is a capacity held on loan, exercised in dependence, and answera-

ble to the One from whom it comes. I read the encyclical's account of creaturely making as subordinating creative agency to the primacy of createdness and grace, so that technical capacity arrives as stewardship, with the accountability stewardship implies.^[29]

The transhumanist devaluation of the body follows once the person is identified with an informational pattern: the biological body is recast as a hardware error, and material reality is reduced to code transferable to more durable media. Waters reads this move as a recapitulation of gnostic and Manichaean dualism.^[30] The analogy works at the structural level and earns its place there. In both, the material cosmos is a defective enclosure, the true self an element alien to it, and salvation the extraction of that self from its bodily condition by superior knowledge – *gnosis* in one case, computational mastery in the other. Jeffrey Pugh has shown that the parallel survives the difference in mechanism, since both share the premise that embodiment is accidental to identity.^[31]

2.5. *Theosis against "Life 3.0"*

The deepest conflict between the two anthropologies is soteriological. Transhumanism treats ageing and death as technical impositions to be conquered – More calls the conquest an urgent and worthy quest^[32] – and there is something decent in the impulse underneath it: refusing to lose people to death

is, after all, what medicine is for. What the technological project does is take that refusal and turn it into an obligation of mastery, with salvation reduced to indefinite continuation.

What the tradition means by the transcendence of human limits has a precise name, and the contrast with “Life 3.0” is unintelligible without it. *Theosis* – deification, *θέωσις* – is the doctrine that the end of human life is real participation in the life of God, given by grace and never produced by nature or technique. Its scriptural warrant is 2 Peter 1:4, where believers become “partakers of the divine nature,” and its classical formulation is Athanasius’s: the Word “became human that we might become God” (2 Pet 1:4 RSV-CE; Athanasius, *De incarnatione* 54.3). The formula is deliberately shocking, and the direction of travel is the whole argument. Deification descends, and that direction is everything. God assumes flesh, hunger, exhaustion, the capacity to be wounded — that assumed materiality becomes the channel through which the gift arrives, so the body is both instrument of deification and its beneficiary. Maximus the Confessor makes the asymmetry explicit, and his terms carry it. Every creature has a *λόγος*, the principle of what it is, held in God and not at the creature’s disposal, and a *τρόπος υπάρξεως*, the mode in which it exists. Deification transfigures the mode and leaves the principle intact, which is how the fathers can promise participation in God without promising that the human being will stop being one.

The engineering program runs the operation backwards. It offers to rewrite what a human being is, and leaves untouched the mode — acquisitive, competitive, frightened of death — that made the rewriting look urgent in the first place. The deified person receives the whole of God without ceasing to be human, and the possibility that transhumanism files under defect is the very condition on which the gift can be received at all (Maximus the Confessor, Amb. 7). Norman Russell shows how consistently the Greek fathers guarded that distinction against any suggestion that divinization abolishes creaturehood.^[33]

Catholic teaching receives the doctrine without hesitation: the *Catechism*, citing Athanasius and Aquinas, states that the Son of God “became man so that we might become God” (CCC §460). Western theology frames deification with different accents — created grace, infused justification, the beatific vision rather than the Palamite distinction of essence and energies — and holds the same ontological claim: the creature is really taken into the life of God and remains a creature. “Life 3.0” travels the other way. It defines the self as information first and then reclassifies the biology as substrate, an implementation error to be corrected or abandoned, which is why Tegmark’s program can promise everything while conceding that the body is expendable. In that description immortality becomes an engineering problem, of the kind that can be priced and scheduled like any other roadmap. The Church offers *theosis*

instead, and theosis has never been for sale. It asks more than an upgrade asks. It asks the cross, which is why the deification the fathers describe can be neither scheduled, nor capitalized, nor delivered on a roadmap.

This is not the first theological reading of transhumanism as a soteriology, nor the first to answer it from deification. Ronald Cole-Turner set Christian hope beside technological enhancement two decades into that debate;^[34] Noreen Herzfeld holds that relationship rather than capacity is what the tradition means by the image of God;^[35] Ted Peters has pressed the further question of whether an artificial general intelligence could bear dignity at all;^[36] and the field now has its survey.^[37] Brandon Gallaher comes closest to the ground of this section, mounting an Eastern Orthodox critique under the title “Technological *Theosis*?” and concluding that the movement is a counterfeit of deification, demonic in structure.^[38] I take that judgment seriously, and the argument here is a different one. Gallaher reasons from the doctrine of deification as a whole. My claim turns on a single distinction inside it, and that distinction does discriminating work which a general appeal to theosis cannot do: deification transfigures the *τρόπος* and leaves the *λόγος* untouched, while the engineering program proposes to edit the *λόγος* and leaves the *τρόπος* as it found it. The difference between them lies in the direction of the operation, which is why Maximus is needed here and theosis in gen-

eral will not serve. The Western qualification carries weight as well. Read through created grace and infused justification, the claim holds for a Catholic doctrine of grace, and not only inside the Palamite frame in which the Orthodox critique is usually cast.

Resurrection is the gift of a transformed embodied life in communion with God. Classing death among the engineering problems yields instead a cybernetic eschatology: immortality inside historical time, by life-extension or mind-uploading, in which a person keeps going and nothing in him is healed. The two are not rivals for the same ground, and seeing why sharpens the objection. Theosis is eschatological: it lies beyond death and passes through it. “Life 3.0” works inside history and offers duration. So the program misdescribes itself in both directions at once. It promises an immortality that lies outside its reach, and the thing genuinely within its reach, more years and more capacity, was never what salvation meant. Dante coined the neologism *trasumanar* – “to transhumanize” – for the soul’s being drawn beyond itself by grace into the vision of God (Dante, *Paradiso* 1.70–72). Nobody engineers it. It is asked of a creature, and what it leaves at the end is a self crucified.

Carried through, such perfectionism threatens a real stratification of humanity: an enhanced minority above a majority unable to afford modification, denying the ontological equality of all human beings. Catholic social

teaching answers with the universal destination of goods, so that technological resources serve the whole human family, and the preferential option remains what it has always been, an option for the poor (MH §67; CV §32).

3. Algorithmic reason and the irreducibility of moral agency

3.1. *From prediction to judgment*

AI systems identify patterns and generate predictions at scales unavailable to unaided human cognition, but their usefulness does not establish moral agency. *Antiqua et Nova* warns that a close equivalence between human intelligence and AI encourages a functionalism in which persons are valued by the tasks they perform (AN §34). Machine outputs are then described in anthropomorphic terms, while human intelligence is assessed primarily by its output. Both moves make the same mistake: reducing intelligence to performance, and losing sight of the embodied, relational conditions human judgment actually depends on.

Selecting an outcome under a formal objective is not the same thing as moral judgment. The latter means recognizing another person as someone to whom justification is owed, taking responsibility for a decision, staying open to mercy. *Magnifica Humanitas*, quoting Pope Francis, observes that automated systems used in employment, credit, or reputation do not know “compassion, mercy, for-

givenness, and above all, the hope that people are able to change” (MH §102). *Dilexit Nos* locates this capacity in the “heart,” where reason, free will, and conscience come together through self-giving love (DN §§9, 28). A scoring system can certainly be reconfigured to lower the weight given to an old default, and that will change an outcome — but it is not forgiveness, because nothing in the system recognizes an obligation or takes responsibility for releasing it.

3.2. *Bias, opacity, and automated exclusion*

Ruha Benjamin shows how technological systems can reproduce racial hierarchy while looking objective — her term “New Jim Code” names the practice of encoding discrimination into systems marketed as neutral.^[39] Virginia Eubanks finds a related pattern in social services: automated eligibility and fraud-detection systems subject poor people to forms of profiling that wealthier citizens rarely face.

^[40] Embed a political judgment in a scoring procedure and its normative assumptions can become nearly invisible, both to the administrators running it and the people it affects. *Magnifica Humanitas* reaches much the same conclusion: algorithmic decisions about worthiness can hide exclusion behind an appearance of neutrality (MH §103). That makes error distribution a moral question, not just a technical one — a system whose false positives land disproportionately on people with

little access to appeal reproduces an existing inequality even where the formal rule is neutral on its face. Bender and colleagues push the concern further, into large language models, whose training can reproduce dominant stereotypes while fluent output tempts users into mistaking pattern-based generation for understanding.^[41]

3.3. Responsibility cannot be automated

Full moral causality belongs to persons, so responsibility for AI has to stay traceable – across design, training, procurement, deployment, appeal (AN §44). And “human in the loop” does not mean much if that human lacks the time, the authority, or any realistic power to reject what the automated system recommends.

Magnifica Humanitas insists that the decision to use force cannot be delegated to opaque or automated processes and must remain under effective human control (MH §§199–200). No increase in targeting speed resolves the moral problem of authorising death. Building on the criteria the encyclical sets out at §§199–200, accountability can be restated as five working conditions: an identifiable decision-maker, an intelligible justification, independent oversight, a meaningful avenue of appeal, and the power to remedy harm.

Algorithmic governance and strong longtermism share a temptation toward abstraction.

Persons are represented through variables suited to optimization – necessary for policy, dangerous the moment the variable is mistaken for the person. In the encyclical’s formulation: if the human being is treated as something to be perfected or surpassed, it becomes easier to regard some lives as less worthy, and to load the vulnerable with the “necessary sacrifices” of species improvement (MH §117).

4. The political economy of AGI and digital colonialism

4.1. Technology is never neutral

Laudato si’ describes the technocratic paradigm as a mode of power that treats reality as material available for manipulation (LS §§101–14). *Magnifica Humanitas* applies this analysis to AI by directing attention to the people and institutions that design, finance, regulate, and use technical systems (MH §104). Ethical evaluation must therefore include ownership, labor, infrastructure, and institutional purpose. A model embodies prior decisions about what it will measure and what it will ignore. For example, a credit model may estimate default risk and a hiring model may predict performance, but neither model determines whether that objective is justifiable or how the costs of error should be distributed. Those questions are decided before training begins.

4.2. Concentrated power and the privatisation of the future

I want to name names, because the abstraction Leo XIV warns against – development driven by “private, often transnational, parties that are endowed with resources and the capacity to intervene that surpass those of many Governments,” power that, “concentrated in the hands of a few... tends to become opaque and evade public oversight, increasing the risk of distorted forms of development that give rise to new dependencies, exclusions, manipulations and inequalities” (MH §5, §§95–96) – has a short, identifiable list of addresses. OpenAI, Microsoft, Alphabet, Meta, and Anthropic control the compute and the models, and are gaining increasing control over the regulatory conversation that will decide what AGI means and on whose terms it arrives. Look at the financial architecture, which is public record: Microsoft holds a 27 per cent stake in the restructured OpenAI Group PBC, valued at roughly \$135 billion, against which OpenAI has committed to purchase some \$250 billion of Azure capacity.^[42] Anthropic – the youngest of the five, and the one that most insistently offers safety as its rationale – is capitalised the same way: Google committed up to \$40 billion in cash and compute in April 2026, much of it flowing back to the investor as purchased cloud and TPU capacity.^[43] These figures will have moved by the time this is read, but the arrangement they illustrate has held across successive rounds: capital and compute cir-

culating inside the same small set of balance sheets, which makes the laboratories’ independence from the platforms largely a matter of corporate form.

The same circulation runs through the politics. Drafting the General-Purpose AI Code of Practice, the European Commission invited model providers to dedicated workshops with the working-group chairs, while more than 350 civil-society organizations, academics, and small firms were confined to written questions submitted through a polling tool.

^[44] The firms that build the systems help write the rules that govern them. Sam Altman, Elon Musk, and Peter Thiel move between building these systems, warning about their dangers, and shaping the politics around both, without changing institutional position. The philanthropy funding the field’s self-scrutiny has the same shape. Open Philanthropy, renamed Coefficient Giving in November 2025, is effective altruism’s largest funder and has directed more than \$4 billion in cumulative grants, some \$50 million of it to technical AI-safety research in 2024 alone.^[45] That money builds an infrastructure of expertise whose accountability runs to a handful of donors. FTX collapsed in 2022, and Sam Bankman-Fried was convicted on seven counts of fraud and conspiracy and sentenced to twenty-five years and some \$11 billion in forfeiture. A criminal conviction settles nothing about a moral philosophy, and I am not offering it as one’s refutation. What the collapse exposed, rather,

was how far the movement's moral authority and its access to capital had become entangled with a handful of personal fortunes^[46] – Bankman-Fried, remember, had marketed his firm's profits as a vehicle for utilitarian good.

Underneath all this Shoshana Zuboff finds the economic mechanism: technology corporations claim human experience unilaterally as free raw material, convert it into behavioral data traded in what she calls “behavioral futures” markets, and end up with an asymmetric “instrumentarian power.”^[47]

The AGI narrative only magnifies this power. Once a small group believes it is building a system that will determine humanity's survival, democratic delay starts to look irresponsible, and technical expertise slides smoothly into political authority.^[48] Leaders here can be entirely sincere about safety and the structure can still be a problem, because the same organizations end up defining the threat, developing the risky capability, and presenting themselves as its indispensable governors.

A caution is due about what this actually establishes. Three relations could in principle connect the anthropology of the preceding chapters to the balance sheets of this one — direct ideological transfer, where a stated premise turns into policy; institutional overlap, where the same people and money move through both; and structural correspondence, where an industry's incentives simply

happen to reward what the anthropology recommends. What the evidence assembled here establishes is the second, robustly, and the third, plainly. Not the first — I make no such claim, nor does the argument need it. An institution can carry assumptions it has never once articulated, and a structure often selects for them more reliably than any manifesto could.

4.3. *Data colonialism*

Nick Couldry and Ulises Mejias call it data colonialism – the appropriation of human life through converting it into data for extraction – and the analogy to historical colonialism captures something real: the seizure of resources, and the social relations imposed to make that extraction look natural.^[49] Michael Kwet extends this into digital colonialism proper, where control of software, cloud services, and surveillance infrastructure lets powerful firms and states dominate digital ecosystems across the Global South.^[50] Shakir Mohamed, Marie-Therese Png, and William Isaac add a further point: a decolonial analysis has to examine epistemology, not just ownership.^[51]

Magnifica Humanitas uses language that is remarkably similar. Colonialism, on its account, now appropriates data and turns personal lives into exploitable information — health data, genetic maps, demographic profiles all become strategic resources that guide markets and decide whose needs count. Without

control by the persons the data describes, the digital age simply becomes “colonial in another form” (MH §178). Raffaele Russo reads the critique through fiscal policy: for him, the encyclical’s condemnation of digital colonialism gives theological grounds for digital service taxes and public regulation of data ownership, so value extracted from user data does not escape into private, transnational hands.^[52] The demand is that the persons a dataset describes recover the power to govern its use.

4.4. Digital dependency and the Central European periphery

This is not only a Global South problem, and the point holds from where I write. Croatia and Hungary host only a small share of the hyper-scale cloud and foundation-model infrastructure on which their institutions increasingly depend, and which decides how their citizens’ data are processed. Installed European data-center capacity sits in a handful of hubs — Frankfurt, London, Amsterdam, Paris, Dublin, with Milan and Copenhagen growing — while Central and Eastern Europe holds a small and late-arriving share of it.^[53] Most of the cloud regions, the foundation models, and the moderation contracts sit in Ireland, the United States, or wherever compute happens to be cheapest that quarter — which means a Croatian university, hospital, or ministry adopting a large language model is renting cognition from an infrastructure it does not own, cannot audit, and could not replace if it had to.

Jakub Eberle and Linda Monsees describe the resulting condition precisely: the states of the Union’s (semi-)periphery possess formal regulatory agency and very little structural capacity, so digital sovereignty operates there as a vocabulary of ambition.^[54] The AI Act sharpens the asymmetry as much as it corrects it. The region gains a regulatory voice through the AI Board. At the same time, the technical content of compliance is settled in harmonized standards drafted in CEN-CENELEC working groups whose experts are drawn overwhelmingly from large firms, and where the resources for sustained participation are unevenly spread across member states.^[55] Regulating what one does not produce is a weak position, and weaker still when the rules acquire their operational meaning from the regulated.

Subsidiarity gives this a normative edge the sovereignty literature does not supply. If higher authorities are to support rather than replace the agency of persons and intermediate bodies, the question for Central European institutions is not only what Brussels should demand of Google, but what our own universities, dioceses, and public bodies are actually doing to retain any agency at all. So ask directly. Which Croatian or Hungarian diocese has refused to route parish, catechetical, or personnel data through a platform whose terms it cannot negotiate? Which university in this region runs and audits its own model instead of renting cognition from Redmond

or Mountain View? I do not know of one. If a reader does, I would like to be corrected, publicly and soon.

Two qualifications belong here. By Central Europe I mean the member states of the region that host little of the infrastructure they use, and the claims below are drawn from Croatia and Hungary, where I can read the sources; I do not extend them to Estonia or Poland, whose trajectories differ. Nor is the choice unconstrained: energy prices, the scale economics of data centers and the market power of three cloud providers narrow what any single institution can do. That constraint is real, and it is not the same as an excuse. What it explains is why building is hard, not why so few have tried. What follows is therefore a diagnosis drawn from public records, offered so that an institution which has in fact done otherwise can refute it.

The expertise is not what is missing. HR-CLARIN, coordinated from Zagreb and joining the Institute of Croatian Language, the university computing center and the national library, has built Croatian corpora and language technologies for years, and the Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics has trained Hungarian-language models on national supercomputing capacity and released them for research use.^[56] What has not followed is institutional. What I have not been able to find is any corresponding institutional move: a diocese, hospital or university in either country

that owns or governs the systems it actually runs on. The region can build. On the evidence available to me it has left the building to others, and I put that forward as a claim to be tested rather than a finding to be assumed.

Call this an infrastructure gap and the description already absolves it. Where an institution has a realistic alternative and takes administrative convenience without asking what it costs in governance, the failure sits closer to sin than to shortfall: the acedia of institutions that could build capacity and choose comfort instead, dressed up as prudence – the noonday listlessness the desert tradition described as the abandonment of a demanding love for an easier inertia^[57] – and a quieter, corporate cousin of the pride that assumes someone else – Brussels, Redmond, Mountain View – will do the work of stewardship on our behalf. In the tradition, acedia names exactly this: the sloth that declines the labor love requires. Here that labor is the governance of the instruments through which a local church now teaches, counsels, and keeps the records of the people entrusted to it.

Before it is a distribution of competences, subsidiarity is a test of institutional courage. A diocese that hands its catechetical and personnel records to a platform whose terms it cannot negotiate, and whose underlying systems it cannot independently audit, has consented to be governed by someone it will never meet, on behalf of people who trusted

it to know better. That is what a betrayal of subsidiarity looks like when nobody has to sign anything and nothing is due today. The one refusal that would count is available and unexercised: episcopal conferences that refuse – not “consider,” refuse – to route pastoral, catechetical, and personnel data through platforms whose terms they cannot negotiate. Behind that refusal lie the unglamorous conditions that make it possible: computing capacity a university can run and audit itself, Croatian and Hungarian corpora held under public or academic license, auditability written into what Catholic schools and hospitals are allowed to buy. None of this substitutes for European-level regulation. It is the layer subsidiarity assigns to the institutions closest to the people affected, and it is the layer where, so far as the public record shows, this region has not acted. These questions mark an empirical gap that research on Catholic and public-sector procurement in the region should close. If our own universities and dioceses refuse to assume the material risk of housing and governing their own digital intelligence, how far must we include ourselves in the diagnosis of digital colonialism?

4.5. Hidden labour and material extraction

The material infrastructure of AI connects model development to mineral extraction and outsourced moderation. Kara documents the conditions under which cobalt

is extracted in the Democratic Republic of Congo, including the labor of children in unsafe pits.^[58] Perrigo reports that Kenyan contractors earning less than two dollars per hour classified descriptions of child sexual abuse, torture, and suicide so that a chatbot would not reproduce them; several workers later described the work as traumatizing.^[59] *Magnifica Humanitas* addresses both forms of extraction. Section 173 discusses workers who perform the hidden labor behind apparently frictionless AI services, while §178 describes health data, genetic material, and epidemiological records drawn from the Global South as “new rare earths.” These cases involve different labor and ownership relations and should not be collapsed into a single process. Together, however, they show that services described in the language of intelligence and automation depend on geographically displaced forms of physical and psychological risk.

Kate Crawford likewise describes AI as an industrial system organized through mineral extraction, energy, logistics, and state power.^[60] Magalhães and Couldry show how projects presented as philanthropy can expand corporate data extraction by making assistance a route into datafication.^[61] These accounts raise a question about the frameworks used to rank social impact. Strong longtermism can reduce the relative weight of present harms when they are compared with very large future populations. Effective-altruist

institutions may translate that priority into funding decisions, while the AGI race adds a claim of urgency. This does not show that longtermist organisations caused the conditions of cobalt extraction or content moderation. It shows how a moral framework can make such existing harms less decisive in institutional priority-setting. The trauma of a Nairobi moderator and the injury of a Congolese miner can be acknowledged while still receiving little practical weight in a calculation dominated by astronomical future value.

5. Solidarity, subsidiarity, and a civilisation of love

5.1. Solidarity and subsidiarity as criteria of innovation

Magnifica Humanitas presents solidarity as a recognition that each person's future is bound to the future of all (MH §§73–74). *Fratelli tutti* adds that digital connection can coexist with polarization, “digital violence,” and social isolation (FT §§42–50). Put together, these claims mean higher productivity alone cannot serve as an adequate measure of social benefit — a technology serves solidarity only when access to its benefits and exposure to its burdens get assessed together. Subsidiarity, in turn, asks a different question: whether higher authorities and powerful private actors support the agency of persons, families, and intermediary institutions, or displace it. In digital systems a platform or mod-

el provider can wield practical authority over employment and access to services, which is exactly why transparency, avenues of appeal, and the capacity to remedy an erroneous decision count as requirements of subsidiarity, not optional add-ons to an efficient system (MH §§68–72).

5.2. The civilisation of love as an institutional project

Magnifica Humanitas describes the “civilization of love” as charity expressed through structures of justice — a phrase that gains economic teeth once the encyclical extends the social function of property to patents, algorithms, platforms, and data (MH §67). Benedict XVI had already made a similar move, applying the universal destination of goods to technological development and warning that technique without ethical direction “sees only itself” (CV §§70, 74). In the digital sphere, this tradition requires legal and institutional arrangements that protect persons rather than treating efficiency as a sufficient criterion. This article's analysis points to three requirements in particular: public capacity to audit systems that affect rights, an effective procedure for contesting algorithmic harm, and governance of sensitive data by institutions accountable to the people it represents. Together they give more determinate content to the encyclical's claim that AI should serve a human community of shared rights and duties (MH §§186–87).

Conclusion

This article has made the case that the disagreement between *Magnifica Humanitas* and the TESCREAL currents examined here cannot be reduced to simple acceptance or rejection of technological innovation. What is really at stake is the end toward which innovation is directed, and the account of the person by which that end gets judged. The transhumanist and longtermist texts discussed here do not add up to a single doctrine, but they converge at specific points: human capacities can become objects of redesign, measurable intelligence can acquire a normative priority it has not earned, and very large future populations can shrink the practical weight of present claims almost to nothing.

The distinction between *logos* and *tropos* in Maximus does real work clarifying the theological disagreement: Christian deification transforms the mode of creaturely existence without ever treating human nature as material for replacement. That does not resolve every question about therapy or enhancement, but it does rule out the assumption that technological transcendence and *theosis* offer alternative routes toward the same goal. The institutional analysis adds a separate but related conclusion, showing substantial overlap among AI devel-

opment, concentrated infrastructure, and privately funded systems of expertise — though not that every corporate policy derives directly from TESCREAL doctrine. Put more narrowly: the existing political economy rewards forms of centralization and abstraction that happen to correspond to the anthropology criticized in the theological sections above.

For Croatian and Hungarian institutions this argument raises an empirical question — about procurement, data governance, and audit capacity — that public documentation is not yet detailed enough to answer: how far can universities, hospitals, and dioceses actually exercise meaningful control over the systems they use? Research on these institutional practices could test the diagnosis of digital dependency offered here, and qualify it where it goes too far. What the immediate normative requirement asks for is modest but concrete: that institutions be able to say where sensitive data are processed, who can audit the systems involved, and what remedy exists when an automated decision causes harm. Solidarity and subsidiarity stay useful criteria precisely because they tie those practical questions back to the equal dignity and agency of the persons affected (MH §129).

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NON-MALEFICENCE AS A FUNDAMENTAL ETHICAL BARRIER TO EUTHANASIA LEGALIZATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores non-maleficence as a key moral ground against euthanasia and assisted suicide legalization. Applying critical approaches to foundational bioethics literature, medical professions' stances, and empirical knowledge from jurisdictions with legalized euthanasia, this paper indicates that physician participation in intentional death is in direct violation of the “do no harm” principle that characterizes medical practice. Slovenia’s 2025 legalization offers today’s context for thinking through how non-maleficence acts as a moral safeguard against the shift in medicine from healer to death-dispensing profession. The case analysis shows that the empirical findings in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Canada support slippery slope concerns about medicine—a concern that has been shown to threaten vulnerable populations with increased risks when euthanasia becomes medicalized. The paper argues that non-maleficence is the most important ethical principle to oppose euthanasia legalization as it preserves professional medical integrity and human dignity.

Keywords: non-maleficence, euthanasia, medical ethics, bioethics, physician-assisted suicide

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Introduction

Euthanasia decriminalisation now is one of the most serious ethical dilemmas facing modern medicine. Laws permitting doctors to deliberately end a patient's life or assist their suicide were passed globally, in places like the Netherlands (2002), Belgium (2002), Luxembourg (2009), Canada (2016), and most recently Slovenia (2025). In the face of consistent resistance from such major medical organizations as the American Medical Association, the World Medical Association and the American College of Physicians, which collectively hold that euthanasia fundamentally violates basic principles of medical ethics,^[1] this progress has been made. As the first Eastern European country to legalize assisted suicide, Slovenia's legalization in July 2025 marks a landmark event. With overwhelming opposition from national medical ethics committees and the Medical Society of Slovenia as well as the Slovenian Medical Chamber's opposition^[2], the National Assembly brought about the Act on Assisted Voluntary Ending of Life by vote of 50–34.^[3] Within the context of this legislation being designed in an area where only 20 percent of those in need receive palliative services available here^[4], the only hospice inpatient facility serving the entire Slovenia is one.^[5] The Slovenian case reveals the troubling scenario where the legalization of euthanasia does not emerge from supportive care to save lives but rather from

there not being one – something that is no different in other jurisdictions. The ethical principle of non-maleficence (first, do no harm) is based in the Hippocratic maxim “primum non nocere”, and has served as the basis of medical practice for two millennia.^[6] It imposes a “boundless obligation” to physicians to not engage in harm-inducing activities which harm patients, thus providing what Beauchamp and Childress classify as a negative constraint which forbids certain behaviors despite their perceived benefits.^[7] When doctors partake in euthanasia, they cross beyond this boundary by being the actual cause of patients' deaths rather than the preserver of these lives.^[8] This paper contends non-maleficence to be the most serious moral obstacle for the legalization of euthanasia and by examining various medical ethics literature and evidence from legalized euthanasia-enforced states shows that physician engagement in lethal harm is inherently antithetical to medicine's aim of healing. The analysis proceeds in three parts — the first covers historical and philosophical foundations of non-maleficence in the Hippocratic tradition. It then examines why this principle contravenes euthanasia policy and what if any of the resulting harm suffered by vulnerable groups in countries where euthanasia has been legalized provides empirical proof for slippery slope concerns.

1. The Principle of Non-Maleficence: Ancient Origins and the Hippocratic Tradition

The first medical statement that clearly articulates non-maleficence is the Hippocratic Oath, which states that no patient should ever be given deadly substances, even if requested: “I will not, even if asked, prescribe a lethal drug to anyone, or by advice induce him to think so”.^[9] This prohibition is not a matter of religious dogma, but of wisdom derived from ancient physicians, who figured that the healing would most effectively only be permissible if there exists clarity for the ethical boundaries where the power to heal should be limited, if trust in public and integrity of professional practice are to be maintained. The Hippocratic tradition, Miles demonstrates, put the responsibility on physicians to see that medical practice as a moral endeavor, one that was to make the people they served better rather than harm them.^[10] In modern bioethics, Beauchamp and Childress systematized non-maleficence as one of four general principles governing medical practice, together with autonomy, beneficence, and justice.^[11] They also point out that the virtue of non-maleficence cannot be attributed to beneficence because non-maleficence, in its nature, is negative. It cannot entail some beneficial action for a physician (they must not do harm). This distinction emerges as important to what is said about euthanasia’s prevention due to non-maleficence. The for-

mer could even provide a means of alleviating suffering by death. But non-maleficence constitutes an absolute prohibition on intentionally causing death.^[12] The philosophical foundation of non-maleficence is further from consequentialist comparisons of benefits and harms. Globokar points out that classical moral theology makes a distinction between physical and moral evil: whether or not we have a moral obligation to harm humans – e.g., by amputating them to prolong life – is irrelevant because moral evil, which is the intentional behaviour done maliciously, is always unacceptable.^[13] This deontological principle indicates that, as an intentional death act, euthanasia is a moral evil regardless of the outcomes or suffering it claims to relieve. The principle persists in their relevance based on its presence as a factor in defining medicine’s defining essence where a solemn commitment to non-maleficence is reduced to a technical skill to be used for a number of purposes, including harming patients. As such, the ban on intentional killing is not just a subjective barrier but an essential component of medicine, one that creates a distinction between healing and biological manipulation. When physicians take part in euthanasia, which violates non-maleficence, they violate the very trust that facilitates the patient-physician relationship.

2. Why the Principle of Non-Maleficence Opposes Legalization of Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

The principle of non-maleficence opposes euthanasia legalization at three interrelated levels for three arguments: the intrinsic wrongness of intentional killing, the corruption of medical practice, and the impossibility of containing harm once legalized. All these angles illustrate how euthanasia runs counter to the very underlying ethical principle of no harm, described in medical ethics as “do no harm”. Firstly, euthanasia inflicts not indirect injuries, but rather intentional, direct and harmful harm on the patient through the intentional causing of death. As White stresses, when a physician prescribes lethal medication with full knowledge of the patient’s suicidal intent and provides instructions for its use, that physician becomes a proximate cause of the death of the patient just as certainly as if the doctor had injected lethal drugs directly.^[14] The causal relationship remains unyielding: The patient’s death would not have happened except for the physician’s behavior. This intentional causal death constitutes a paradigm breach of non-maleficence: It turns the physician from healer into death-agent. An appeal to patient autonomy does not absolve a non-maleficence violation. Beauchamp and Childress acknowledge the role of autonomy as a basic medical ethical principle, however, they cannot trump the prohibition of harming.^[15] What, beyond

that, the request for death by one patient compels physicians and others to partaken in participation in the harmful act, and thus violates their duty in professionalism for physicians and the Hippocratic oath. The social aspect of euthanasia means it never can be fully autonomous — it can never be fully autonomous — and so must corrupt the medical profession’s allegiance to healing. Second, euthanasia perverts medical care, since it alters the nature of the physician’s role and the nature of what medicine is meant to be, and therefore the way it should be. To allow physicians to kill violates trust between doctor and patient, respect for the medical profession, and the value of medicine itself, Kass argues.^[16] When healing professionals become agents of death, the trajectory of medicine takes a complete turn. As Schockenhoff notes, physician participation in suicide is to share the intention of the one who wishes to commit suicide and becomes morally equivalent to the conduct of the principal actor.^[17] This shift from safeguard of life to terminator of that life is an elementary betrayal of the business of medicine. In addition the notion of human dignity grounds non-maleficence’s opposition for euthanasia. Globokar insists that every human being, whatever his or her health status, has his or her dignity, which would shield him or her from being interfered with in his or her life by anyone.^[18] The dignity associated with this implies that human life has intrinsic significance – it is worth something – in the absence of measures of quality

of life or ability to function. Non-maleficence ensures such dignity, which forbids those who refuse to respect human life as disposable when distress / disability undermines quality. Third, the social impacts of the legalization of euthanasia show that damage is beyond just personal cases but also to the oppressed and society at large. Oh points out how the euphemistic language “death with dignity” and “medical aid in dying” helps to hide the moral truth of euthanasia and make it seem normal.

^[19] These linguistic tactics reflect a larger social shift in which suffering is no longer bearable, and death replaces either disability or dependence. As Globokar cautions, for euthanasia to be legal puts silent pressures on the sick, the disabled, and the elderly to choose leaving this world and not bearing the burden of families and their environment.^[20] That euthanasia itself becomes the expectation of those considered burdensome.

3. The Slippery Slope Argument and Increased Harm in Case of Legalization of Euthanasia

Although frequently dismissed as speculation as the slippery slope argument against legalization, there is significant empirical support for it in jurisdictions that have legalized it. Evidence from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada shows systematic expansion of euthanasia beyond initial parameters, validating that legalization invariably entails greater application and harm to vulnerable populations.

What started as euthanasia for terminally ill adults facing intolerable physical hardship in the Netherlands has grown considerably. In 2024, the Regional Euthanasia Review Committees (RTEs) in the Netherlands received 9,958 euthanasia notifications, marking a 10% increase from 9,068 in 2023 and accounting for 5.8% of the country’s 172,049 total deaths. The gender distribution was nearly equal, with 4,996 males (50.2%) and 4,962 females (49.8%). Termination of life on request comprised 9,753 cases (97.94%), assisted suicide 187 (1.88%), and combinations 18 (0.18%). Common somatic conditions dominated at 8,593 cases (86.29%), including cancer (5,346), neurological disorders (681), cardiovascular disease (429), pulmonary disorders (346), and somatic combinations (1,791). Dementia accounted for 427 notifications (340 decisionally competent patients), psychiatric disorders for 219, multiple geriatric syndromes for 397, psychiatric-somatic combinations for 90, and other conditions for 232. The highest age group was 70-80 years (3,284 cases), followed by 80-90 (2,980) and 60-70 (1,731); three cases involved minors aged 12-18. Most euthanasias occurred at home (7,728), with others in nursing homes (675), hospices (863), care homes (337), hospitals (226), or elsewhere (129). General practitioners notified 7,913 cases, elderly-care specialists 424, psychiatrists 72, and the Euthanasia Expertise Centre was involved in 1,417. Organ/tissue donation followed euthanasia in at least 28 cases, and “double euthanasia” occurred 54 times (108 patients). Six

notifications failed to meet due care criteria, with an average processing time of 40 days.^[21] This expansion mirrors Belgium's experience. Since euthanasia legislation became legal in 2002, cases rose from 236 cases in 2003 to 2,700 cases in 2021.^[22] Belgium was the first country to legalize euthanasia for minors without age restrictions, and in 2014, the request went out, asking for only a child's capacity for "capacity of discernment."^[23] Euthanasia in non-life-threatening conditions has steadily increased, with psychiatric disorders accounting for 370 cases (2002–2021) according to the Belgian Commission on Control and Evaluation.^[24] As Raus et al. note, Belgium's 'tired of life' conversation^[25] highlights the drive to extend the criterion beyond simply medical conditions and to include existential suffering. The fastest-growing program is Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD). Legalized in 2016 for terminally ill adults, eligibility expanded in 2021 to cover non-terminal conditions; as of 2022, MAiD alone is now the fourth leading cause of death in Canada: 4.1% of all deaths were attributed to MAiD in 2022.^[26] The financial examination by Jamil and Pearce yields concerning incentives, estimating the available government income savings of CAD \$1.273 trillion by 2047, if MAiD extends to vulnerable communities including the mentally ill, homeless, and indigenous peoples.^[27] By this economic construct euthanasia does not simply stop being medical but becomes a cost-reducing means, putting a systemic burden on

already-vulnerable groups who eat up more resources than they produce. The expansion into psychiatric disorders is an especially stark example of the slippery slope. Kim et al. An analysis of psychiatric euthanasia in the Netherlands found that between 2011 and 2014, 66 patients received euthanasia for psychiatric disorders, with 70% being women.^[28] The subjectivity of "unbearable suffering" in mental illness coupled with the semi-episodic characteristics of many psychiatric disorders makes an assessment of hopelessness itself intrinsically problematic. As Verhofstadt et al. note, clinicians find it difficult to discern between the virtues of "attentiveness" and paternalism in psychiatric euthanasia requests; some consider "a triadic dialogue in which the patient and her relevant health carers with her social circle of friends and family is involved".^[29] But that expanded decision-making undermines individual agency while escalating social pressure. Disability rights organizations have raised particular concerns^[30]; euthanasia contributes to discriminatory presumptions that all lives lived with disability are worse. A society that prefers death to appropriate support services sends a clear message to vulnerable people: those lives are perceived as less deserving of protection and investment. Euthanasia as a normalization transforms cultural perspectives on suffering, disability, and human value. This contradiction shows how normalization functions as the slope itself—what used to seem unthinkable, becomes routine.

Conclusion

The principle of non-maleficence remains the most powerful ethical boundary against the legalization of euthanasia, based on millennia of medical tradition and supported by modern empirical evidence. This has shown three pathways by which physician engagement in intentional death violates the founding tenet of “do no harm”: direct causation of death as paradigmatic harm; a perversion of the healing purpose of medicine, and inexorable widening of harm to vulnerable populations after it is legalized. The real evidence from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada also shows that the transition from limited exceptional euthanasia to normal medical practice is not theoretical but demonstrable reality. What begins as a compassionate response to unbearable terminal suffering becomes an inexorable means of covering the psychiatric patient, the disabled, children or those with existential distress. The shift to cost-effective medical options, exemplified by Canada’s MAiD program, illustrates both that economics can drive ethical degradation once the principle of non-maleficence is violated. Functional capacities, quality of life, or social utility cannot be the basis of human dignity. When medicine abandons its solemn and moral obligation to protect life — even in an unprecedented event — it undermines not only individual patients but the core equality and inviolability of all human beings. One of the most obvious instances of this involves the

apparent linguistic manipulation described by Oh,^[31] where euthanasia has become “medical aid in dying” and suicide “death with dignity” as acts of euphemism: intentional attempts to cover up moral reality. Such semantic shifts in turn help to normalize practices that had the weight of past generations of physicians’ judgment as the ultimate breach of medical ethics. Reclaiming such exact wording which recognizes euthanasia as intentional killing is necessary in retaining ethical clarity. For future research and ethics the analysis raises some difficult questions: First, how can societies create effective palliative care systems that meet the real suffering that drives requests for euthanasia, but do not compromise non-maleficence, and how do these systems relate to the principle of non-maleficence? The Slovenian case shows that the legalization of euthanasia follows primarily from inadequate supportive care, far from even excellent alternatives. This can lead to research that investigates how holistic palliative care, including psychological and spiritual support can also support a commitment to life in the face of an unfulfilled existence. Second, how does economic perspective become relevant for end-of-life medical decisions — can health care systems overcome financial incentives to portray vulnerable lives as burdensome? The Canadian experience shows that cost-benefit analysis can make euthanasia more than just an extraordinary form of medical interven-

tion, but also an ideal economic solution. To navigate this, the ethical frameworks need to bring together the economics of healthcare coupled with human dignity to prevent the commodification of death. Third, how does the medical profession maintain that commitment to non-maleficence in the face of cultural dynamics that promote autonomous choice as the highest good? As societies come to value self-determination at the expense of traditional medical ethics, the dichotomy of individual autonomy and professional integrity must be rediscovered. A research challenge is to examine in what ways can physicians exercise patient autonomy and provide appropriate boundaries and protect themselves from helping to intentionally end lives. The rule of non-maleficence saves not only patients but the profession of medicine itself.

When physicians take up the role of agents of death, they relinquish the essential commitment that distinguishes healing from mere technical manipulation of biology. Studies from places with euthanasia as an instrument of healthcare law reveal that once the moral and philosophical barrier is exceeded, growth is certain, and harm begins to spread across the vulnerable. The complete prohibition of doctor involvement in intentional death is not outdated paternalism but necessary medical integrity and human dignity protection. In the era of increasing pressure on society to legalize euthanasia, the principle of non-maleficence holds the ethical clarity necessary to fight against the recasting for medical practice of medicine in such a way that medical practice of healing becomes a practice of the instrument of death.

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DEFINITION OF BIOETHICS

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■ ABSTRACT

This article offers a critical scholarly review of Roman Globokar's *Bioetika* (2025), published by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Ljubljana, with particular emphasis on the conceptual and methodological framework developed in its first chapter, "Definition of Bioethics." The analysis examines Globokar's reconstruction of the historical development of bioethics, especially the distinction between Van Rensselaer Potter's holistic and ecological conception of bioethics and the predominantly biomedical Georgetown tradition associated with Beauchamp and Childress. Particular attention is given to Globokar's attempt to move beyond a narrowly clinical understanding of bioethics toward an integrative ethics of life encompassing environmental responsibility, social justice, global health, non-human life, ecosystems, and future generations. The review further considers the book's engagement with European philosophical traditions, personalist anthropology, and Christian theological perspectives, as well as its treatment of the institutional development of bioethics in Slovenia. The article argues that Globokar's principal contribution lies in his effort to reconnect bioethics with its broader philosophical, anthropological, ecological, and theological foundations. In doing so, *Bioetika* presents bioethics as an interdisciplinary and socially engaged field grounded in human dignity, ecological integrity, responsibility, and solidarity.

Keywords: Roman Globokar; *Bioetika*; bioethics; Van Rensselaer Potter; Georgetown tradition; personalism; theological ethics; ecological ethics; human dignity; social responsibility.

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Introduction

Roman Globokar's *Bioethics* (2025) emerges at a significant juncture in contemporary ethical discourse, addressing not only the classical dilemmas of biomedical ethics but also the broader environmental, social, and technological concerns that define the scope of modern bioethics.^[1] Published by the Faculty of Theology at the University of Ljubljana in 2025, the work represents a continuation of Globokar's longstanding engagement with ethics, theology, and social responsibility. It is about the book, that is much more than a manual of bioethical norms; it is a philosophical-theological treatise that seeks to reorient the ethical compass of modernity toward a vision of integrative humanism.

Historical Foundations of Bioethics and The Two Traditions: Potter vs. Georgetown

This short review offers a scholarly analysis of the book *Bioethics*, evaluating its conceptual frameworks, methodological coherence, and contribution to the field of bioethics, with particular attention to its interdisciplinary breadth and theological anchoring, and with a special and deeper accent to the first chapter called "Definition of Bioethics". The same starts with the historical foundations of Bioethics where Globokar by revisiting the historical genealogy of bioethics, carefully distinguishing the divergent currents that

have shaped its evolution. He highlights the dual origin of bioethics, rooted in both Van Rensselaer Potter's ecological vision and the Georgetown tradition's biomedical focus. This bifurcation is not merely a historical footnote but forms the analytical spine of the work. Potter's aspiration for a bridge between biological knowledge and ethical wisdom is contrasted with the principlist approach developed at Georgetown, particularly by Beauchamp and Childress, which emphasized autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.^[2] Globokar traces these traditions to their philosophical and cultural sources, demonstrating how they influenced the institutionalization of bioethics in Western academia and healthcare policy.

Summarized, one of the strengths of Globokar's exposition lies in his critical appraisal of these foundational paradigms, i.e. two traditions: Potter vs. Georgetown. He appreciates Potter's holistic vision, which anticipated current ecological concerns and the imperative for a sustainable ethical framework. Simultaneously, he critiques the Georgetown model for its procedural and deontological rigidity, which often reduces complex moral dilemmas to algorithmic decision trees. Globokar argues for an integrative approach that does not abandon the principlist tradition but situates it within a broader anthropological and theological context. This synthesis resonates with the European continental tradition, particularly in the works of Hans Jonas,

Paul Ricoeur, and Emmanuel Levinas, who serve as important interlocutors throughout the text.^[3]

Case Studies and Institutional Developments of The Bioethics in Slovenia

On this intellectual journey dealing, which deals not only with the historical foundations of Bioethics, Globokar goes further analyzing the case studies and institutional developments. The book offers a detailed account of how bioethics became institutionalized through hospital ethics committees, academic programs, and legal instruments. Globokar meticulously examines landmark cases – such as Karen Ann Quinlan, Nancy Cruzan, and Terri Schiavo – which catalyzed public awareness and legislative action in the United States. He contrasts these developments with European and Slovenian contexts, where the Catholic intellectual tradition has played a more visible role in shaping bioethical discourse. The analysis of these cases is not merely descriptive; Globokar engages them as hermeneutical events that illuminate the normative tensions between individual autonomy, communal responsibility, and institutional authority.

Furthermore, what has a big particularly valuable contribution of his *Bioethics*, is its focus on the Slovenian bioethical landscape, a topic often marginalized in Anglophone literature. Globokar traces the development of ethical

committees, legal regulations, and academic programs in Slovenia, providing a critical assessment of their effectiveness and limitations. He notes that the Slovenian context is marked by a complex interplay between post-socialist legal reform, Catholic moral theology, and European Union directives. Globokar situates his analysis within broader discussions on transitional ethics, arguing that bioethics in Slovenia must navigate the tension between inherited normative frameworks and emergent pluralistic sensibilities. This section is enriched by empirical data and institutional history, offering a model for contextualized bioethical reflection.

About the Return to the Expanded Bioethics and the Philosophical Reflections and Ethical Paradigms

In the last part of the first chapter, the subtitled “Bioethics as an ethics of life in the broader sense”, Globokar pleads for a return to an expanded vision of bioethics, echoing Potter’s original aspiration but informed by the ethical challenges of the Anthropocene.

^[4] He critiques the reduction of bioethics to biomedical problem-solving and calls for a reorientation toward environmental ethics, social justice, and global health. Drawing on recent developments in planetary health, climate ethics, Globokar argues that the moral community must be widened to include non-human life, ecosystems, and future generations. This expanded bioethics requires

an epistemological humility and ethical responsibility that transcend disciplinary silos.

In this context, I can confirm that the previous efforts are justified because they are grounded in the philosophical depth of Bioethics, which is evident in Globokar's engagement with a range of ethical paradigms, from deontology and consequentialism to virtue ethics and care ethics. He explores these traditions not as mutually exclusive but as complementary lenses for moral discernment. In this sense, a notable feature is

evidence in his use of personalist philosophy, particularly in the vein of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II) and Emmanuel Mounier, which emphasizes the dignity, relationality, and transcendence of the human person.^[5] Globokar argues that bioethics must be grounded in a robust anthropology that resists both reductive materialism and abstract universalism. He also incorporates the theology of creation and incarnation as resources for a more holistic ethical vision, demonstrating how faith-based perspectives can enrich rather than narrow bioethical discourse.

Conclusion – Evaluation of Globokar's Contribution: Critical Reflections and Future Directions

To conclude this short evaluation of his contribution, I'll say that, not only the first chapter, but in general, *Bioetika* stands out for its methodological pluralism, conceptual clarity, and normative coherence. Globokar does not merely synthesize existing positions; he constructs a framework that is at once critical and constructive, rooted in theological reflection and responsive to contemporary ethical crises. His call for an integrative bioethics is not a vague appeal to interdisciplinarity but a carefully argued case for ethical convergence grounded in human dignity, ecological integrity, and social solidarity. The book is particularly effective in bridging the gap between academic theology and applied ethics,

offering insights that are accessible to scholars, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

That's why his effort, this book, is a significant contribution to contemporary bioethical scholarship. It revives the original promise of bioethics as an interdisciplinary, ethically rich, and socially engaged field. The book challenges the narrowing of bioethical inquiry to clinical dilemmas and instead proposes a capacious vision rooted in theological humanism, ecological consciousness, and philosophical depth. It deserves a wide readership among ethicists, theologians, medical professionals, and all those concerned with the moral dimensions of life, death, and the environment.

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STEWARDSHIP, RELATION, AND THE WIDENING OF BIOETHICS

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ABSTRACT

Chapter ten of Roman Globokar's *Bioethics* (Ljubljana, 2025) makes a claim that reshapes the whole book: bioethics that stops at the clinic is an incomplete account of its own subject. This review essay follows how the chapter earns that claim. Its centre of gravity is the philological reading of *kābaš* and *rādāh*, which refuses both the apologetic denial that Genesis 1:28 carries a violent potential and the penitential acceptance of Lynn White's charge; around it stand a historically exact account of how environmental responsibility became thinkable, a fair presentation of anthropocentrism, biocentrism and ecocentrism, and an unusually candid assessment of the Catholic Church's own delay in coming to the ecological question. The chapter closes with a constructive proposal of its own, an anthropo-relational model that locates the standing of the human person in responsibility rather than in rank. I argue that this model is the chapter's most valuable contribution and that it deserves the fuller treatment Globokar is well placed to give it.

Keywords: environmental bioethics; Roman Globokar; anthropo-relationalism; *Laudato si'*; Lynn White Jr.; Van Rensselaer Potter; stewardship of creation; bioethics education

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I. A chapter that changes the shape of the book

Globokar's *Bioethics* is a manual for students of the Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana. Its first nine chapters cover the terrain a reader would expect: the definition of bioethics, the pluralism of values and the common principles, the two streams of the discipline, the status of the embryo, abortion, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, genetic engineering and euthanasia.^[1] Chapter ten does something a textbook rarely risks. It argues that everything preceding it was, taken alone, an incomplete account of what bioethics is.

That is a claim about the discipline rather than about an issue, and a manual is under no obligation to make it. Most introductions treat environmental ethics as an adjacent field to be mentioned at the end. Globokar instead returns to the discipline's founding gesture and notes that the narrowing came later: Potter's *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future* had already insisted that bioethics concerns the human relationship to living nature as much as relations among people.^[2] Recovering that starting point is a considered decision about what the book is for, and the twenty-nine pages that follow are written to sustain it.

II. Why ecology became a moral question

The chapter opens by explaining why nature was long not an object of moral responsibility, and the explanation turns on scale rather than moral failure: „For a long time, nature was not an object of human responsibility, because the dimensions of human action vis-à-vis natural processes were so complex.”^[3] Ethics concerned itself with what human beings could actually affect, which meant other human beings. Modern science and its applications changed the arithmetic, and the ecological awareness that emerged in the 1960s registered the change.

The passage is two paragraphs long and free of the moralising that usually accompanies this story. It also does more than establish a chronology. It shows students that the scope of ethics is not fixed in advance, that it widens as human capacities widen, and that a question can be genuinely new without being a fashion. For a first-year reader, that is a more important lesson than any particular position in environmental ethics, and Globokar delivers it without labouring it.

III. Three models, presented fairly

Section 10.1 sets out anthropocentrism, biocentrism and ecocentrism. The presentation is economical, quotable, and better than most comparable treatments precisely because it declines to caricature any of the three.

The handling of Hans Jonas shows the quality of the reading. Jonas is commonly filed under biocentrism or ecocentrism; Globokar classifies him as a moderate anthropocentrist and explains why. The imperative „Act in such a way that the effects of your actions are compatible with the sustainability of authentic human life on earth”^[4] makes the continued existence of humanity the criterion; however much intrinsic purpose Jonas grants other living beings, the criterion remains unchanged. That is a judgment rather than a summary. It is also the kind of judgment a student can learn from, since it shows an author who has read Jonas rather than looked him up.

Schweitzer receives the most generous space, including the long boxed passage about the earthworm carried from the road and the window kept shut so that insects do not burn on the lamp.^[5] Globokar does not present reverence for life as a comfortable doctrine. He draws out its central difficulty — that saving one life often destroys another, that raising a fallen fledgling means killing the insects it will eat — and quotes Schweitzer’s answer, which offers no decision procedure at all, only a demand for scrupulous individual accounting: „Where I harm any life, it must be very clear to me whether it is really necessary.”^[6] The comment that follows is exact: the ethic of reverence for life „does not provide concrete criteria for judging which life to give priority to.”^[7]

A textbook that lets a position it presents sympathetically remain unresolved teaches students the difference between an ethic and an algorithm.

Leopold completes the section, quoting the criterion that has organised ecocentric ethics ever since: a thing is right if it preserves the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community, and wrong if it tends otherwise.

^[8] Globokar then closes with questions put to the reader rather than answered for him: „Are we harming nature if we crush a stone in the sand? Is it permissible to destroy viruses that cause disease?”^[9] These are the questions a seminar will actually argue about—their presence in a manual signals confidence in the students.

IV. White, Genesis, and an honest reading of the tradition

Section 10.2 takes up the charge that Judeo-Christian anthropocentrism produced the ecological crisis, and this is where the chapter is at its best. I came to it half expecting the standard apologetic manoeuvre. Globokar does not perform it.

He notes that White’s five-page article in *Science* summarised the opening chapters of Genesis „in one paragraph in a very simplistic and uncritical way”^[10] — and then reproduces that paragraph in full so the reader can judge for himself, which is more than most rebut-

tals of White are willing to do. He also reports what rebuttals of White almost never report: that the essay ends by locating the resource for a different relation to nature inside the Christian tradition, in Francis of Assisi, who „sought to dethrone man from his powerful throne over creation and to establish a democracy of all God-created beings.”^[11] He also gives the critique its due, noting that it stimulated deeper reflection on the human relationship to the natural environment and helped a Christian ecological ethic develop.^[12] Treating an adversary’s argument as an occasion rather than an attack is a rare disposition in confessional textbooks.

The exegesis in section 10.3 is the most substantial scholarly work in the chapter and, I suspect, what students will remember. Globokar does not pretend the verbs of Genesis 1:28 are gentle. *Kābaš* originally means to step on and can mean to subjugate, “which often involves violence”;^[13] *rādāh* carries a comparable ambivalence, since governance “always presupposes a relationship of power and force and allows for the abuse of power.”^[14] Having conceded that much, he shows why the concession does not yield White’s conclusion: verse 28 must be read against verse 26, where the same verb defines what the human being was made for, and against the ancient Near Eastern ideal of kingship as shepherding rather than despotism.^[15] The argument is philological before it is theological, which is why it persuades.

Two further moves in this section deserve particular notice. The first is the Sabbath. Globokar points out that the priestly creation account ends with the seventh day and not with the human being, so that dominion is framed by rest, and that rest is owed to the neighbour and to the animals alike.^[16] A creation narrative whose climax is a cessation of work is difficult to enlist in the service of unlimited extraction, and I have not seen the point made this compactly anywhere in the textbook literature. The second is *creatio continua*. Creation is presented as an open process, so that the verdict “very good” describes a direction and not a finished state^[17] — from which Globokar draws the uncomfortable consequence instead of avoiding it: creation is “not perfect,” with “chaos still present in the process,” and therefore “fragile and vulnerable.”^[18] A manual willing to say this much about the world it describes has earned the reader’s trust.

V. *Laudato si’* and the Catholic turn

Section 10.4 is the longest in the chapter, and it opens with a page of institutional self-examination that I would put in front of students on its own.

Globokar asks why Catholic moral theology came so late to the ecological question, and his answer is not flattering to his own tradition. In human bioethics, the Church “has always been at the forefront.” In contrast, in

environmental bioethics it “has been content with the principled position that man must not destroy the natural environment, but has not been particularly prominent in advocating the protection of the environment.”^[19] He then names the mechanism: many environmental activists denied the special standing of the human being and opposed Catholic positions on the protection of life from conception, and the two commitments hardened into mutual suspicion. His verdict on that opposition runs to a single sentence, and it is the sentence I would write on the board: “This opposition is in many ways illogical, because both are about promoting and preserving life.”^[20] He is equally unsentimental about the pontificates, observing that environmental protection “remained on the periphery” of John Paul II’s bioethical concerns and that Benedict’s position in *Caritas in Veritate* remains “in many respects anthropocentric.”^[21] Candour of this kind, in a manual published by a faculty of theology, is worth more to a student than any amount of advocacy.

The reading of *Laudato si’* that follows is careful and corrects a widespread misunderstanding. Globokar shows that Francis’s target is a specific modern formation rather than the biblical tradition, one that “has taken shape within modern scientific-technical civilisation, in which man seeks to assert his independence from nature and to assume God’s place in it.”^[22] He tracks the encyclical’s vocabulary of disordered, modern, distorted

and excessive anthropocentrism, reproduces paragraphs 117 and 118 in full, and notes that Francis explicitly declines biocentrism as the remedy, concluding that the encyclical itself advocates a moderate anthropocentrism.^[23] He extends the account to *Laudate Deum*, quoting Francis on the need to rethink the meaning and the limits of human power.^[24]

He also does something his fellow commentators generally do not, which is to record where the encyclical leaves work undone. Having noted that Francis attributes intrinsic value both to individual creatures and to ecosystems, Globokar remarks that “it is not entirely clear what this intrinsic value of other created beings consists in and what concrete consequences this has for human action.”^[25] A philosophical reservation about a papal document, stated without hedging, in a manual for theology students, is a small act of scholarly independence and should be recognised as one.

If I may register a wish rather than an objection: the passage from *Laudate Deum* on the limits of human power, and the encyclical’s own analysis of the technocratic paradigm, seem to me to open onto the rest of the book in a way the chapter has no room to pursue. Reproductive technology, genetic intervention and end-of-life medicine are all domains in which technical capacity generates its own normative pressure, which is why they are bioethical problems at all. That the same pressure operates on a watershed as on a

laboratory is a thought this chapter makes available, and I would be glad to see Globokar develop it in an essay where he has the space for it. It is a compliment to a textbook to say that it points beyond its own format.

VI. Anthropo-relationality: the chapter's own contribution

The chapter does not end with a survey. It advances a position, and readers of the earlier sections may be surprised by how much is packed into a short passage. In the concluding pages of section 10.4, Globokar writes that “the most appropriate approach is the anthropo-relational one, which recognises man’s special place because of his moral responsibility to care for creation, while at the same time seeing man in direct relationship with other living beings and with creation as a whole. Man is a creature of relations and cannot live without relations with other creatures and the natural environment.”^[26]

This is the most valuable idea in the chapter, and it does work that none of the three surveyed models can do. Relationality locates the human person’s standing in responsibility rather than in rank. That single move preserves the theological anthropology the previous nine chapters were built on while removing what makes anthropocentrism dangerous, because a being whose standing consists in an obligation cannot license the arbitrary use of what it is obliged to; it can only fail. It also

answers the levelling objection Francis raises against biocentrism, since the human being remains singular precisely as the one who can be held to account. Anyone teaching this material will find the concept immediately useful, and I expect it to be quoted well beyond the readership of a Ljubljana manual.

Because the idea is this good, I would like more of it. A model that resolves the tension between positions the chapter has just spent twenty pages developing deserves its own section, with the objections it will meet. The replies to them, and with at least one of the chapter’s own cases worked through in its terms. Globokar has clearly thought; the format has allowed him to state the conclusion. A separate study of anthropo-relationality would be a genuine contribution to environmental bioethics, and this chapter is the natural place from which to begin it.

VII. The pedagogy

The teaching apparatus is unusually well made and deserves description, since this is where a textbook either works or does not.

The learning outcomes are honest about their own ambition. Alongside recognition and knowledge, they state that the student “will be personally encouraged to do your part to take responsibility for the natural environment and the future of our planet.”^[27] A manual that declares its formative intention is preferable to

one that smuggles the same intention in under a neutral register, and in a faculty of theology the declaration is appropriate.

The two case studies are the best part of the apparatus.^[28] The first sets a municipal waste recycling plant against an undeveloped green space with walking paths and a playground the parents built themselves; the second sets twenty wind turbines against migratory birds, noise and the visual amenity that sustains local tourism. Neither is rigged. Each puts a genuine environmental good on both sides, so a student cannot resolve them by identifying the environmentally correct answer, and the second forces the recognition – normally suppressed in undergraduate discussion – that climate mitigation and biodiversity protection can pull in opposite directions. The accompanying questions about who should decide, and how all stakeholders can be heard, introduce a procedural dimension that gives a seminar somewhere to go.

The ten questions for deeper discussion are similarly well judged.^[29] The first asks students to argue with the claim that environmental concern is “mainly about green ideology, which contradicts the Christian view that man has a special place within creation,” which is exactly the objection they will meet outside the seminar room and is better met inside it. The fifth asks where White’s critique is justified and where it is too simplistic, which correctly prevents the earlier section from being read

as a refutation. The sixth asks why, at least in Slovenia, no stronger Catholic environmental movement has developed; I would like that question asked in Croatia as well. The eighth, on the climate finance agreed at Baku in November 2024, brings the global dimension into the room. And the tenth asks the student to spend time admiring the nature around him and to write down his impressions. I confess that I first read this as filler. On reflection, it is the most theologically consistent item on the list, since the chapter’s account of the first human attitude toward creation is “gratitude for creation and admiration of its beauty.”^[30] If that claim is meant seriously, an exercise in attention belongs in the coursework. I withdraw the objection.

VIII. Conclusion

The tenth chapter of Globokar’s *Bioethics* does what a textbook chapter should and rather more. It gives students an accurate map of environmental ethics, teaches them to read a contested biblical text with the philological tools the reading requires, and refuses both temptations that beset treatments of Christianity and ecology – the apologetic denial that there is a case to answer, and the penitential acceptance of a caricature. The frankness about the Church’s own delay, the willingness to note where *Laudato si’* leaves a concept underdetermined, and the constructive proposal of an anthropo-relational model are more than a manual of this kind usually undertakes.

The chapter's scope decisions are, in my view, the right ones for its purpose. A reader coming from outside the confessional context will notice that the ecological resources of other traditions are not surveyed, and that the animal question is held over to chapter eleven; both follow reasonably from what the book is and where it is taught. One practical note for the publisher rather than for the author: the English edition would benefit from a further proofreading pass before it is put in front of anglophone students, since several terms have not survived translation intact. The scholarship is unaffected, and the book de-

serves the wider circulation that a corrected printing would secure.

What stays with me is the chapter's central pedagogical achievement. Globokar has given his students the tools to see that responsibility for the natural world continues the responsibilities they have been studying for nine chapters – the same commitment to life, extended to its proper range, rather than an adjacent enthusiasm. Whether they draw the connection will depend on the seminar. The chapter has made it possible, which is what a good textbook is for, and it is why I would assign this one.

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- [1] Roman Globokar, *Bioethics*, TEOF Manuals 29 (Ljubljana: Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana, 2025). The chapter under review is „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 245–73; all page references below are to this volume.
- [2] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 245, invoking Van Rensselaer Potter, *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971).
- [3] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 246.
- [4] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 247, quoting Hans Jonas, *Das Prinzip Verantwortung: Versuch einer Ethik für die technologische Zivilisation* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1984), 57. English translation: *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
- [5] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 249–50.
- [6] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 250, citing Schweitzer 1990, 340.
- [7] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 250.
- [8] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 251, citing Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac, and Sketches Here and There* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987 printing), 262.
- [9] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 252.
- [10] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 253.
- [11] Lynn White Jr., „The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1206, quoted in Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 254.
- [12] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 254.
- [13] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 257, citing Lintner 2017, 42–43.
- [14] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 258, citing Lintner 2017, 43.
- [15] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 257, citing Claus Westermann, *Schöpfung* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1971), 75–80.
- [16] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 258–59, citing Exodus 23:12 and Deuteronomy 5:12–14.
- [17] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 259.
- [18] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 259.
- [19] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 260.
- [20] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 260.
- [21] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 261–62, citing John Paul II, *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation*, Message for the World Day of Peace (Vatican City, 1990), and Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009), §51.
- [22] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 263.
- [23] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 263–65, citing Francis, *Laudato si’* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015), §§69, 81, 115–19; §§117–18 are reproduced in full at 264.
- [24] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 265–66, citing Francis, *Laudate Deum*, Apostolic Exhortation (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2023), §§19, 28.
- [25] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 263.
- [26] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 268.
- [27] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 245.
- [28] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 269–71 (Examples 10.1 and 10.2).
- [29] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 272–73.
- [30] Globokar, „Caring for the Natural Environment,” 268.

